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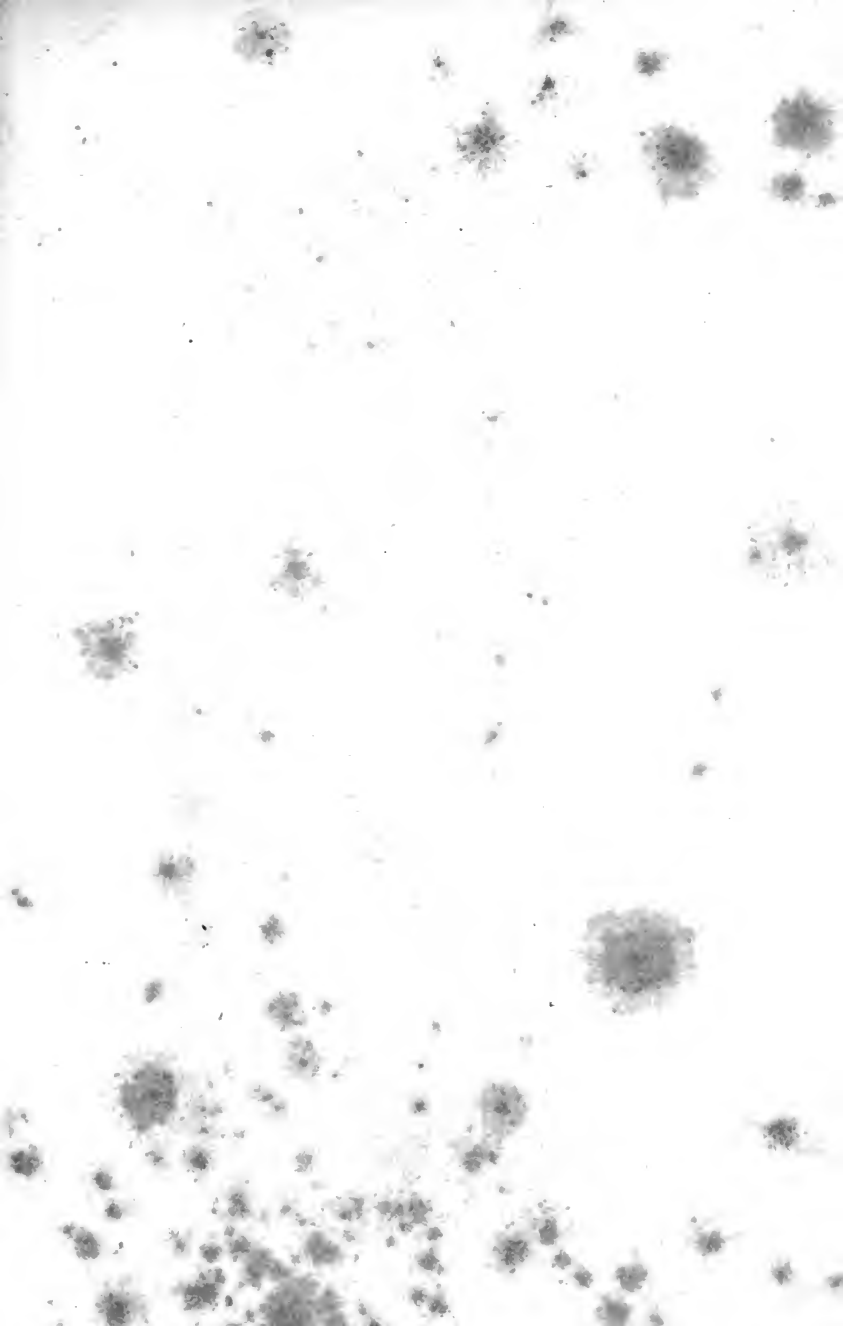
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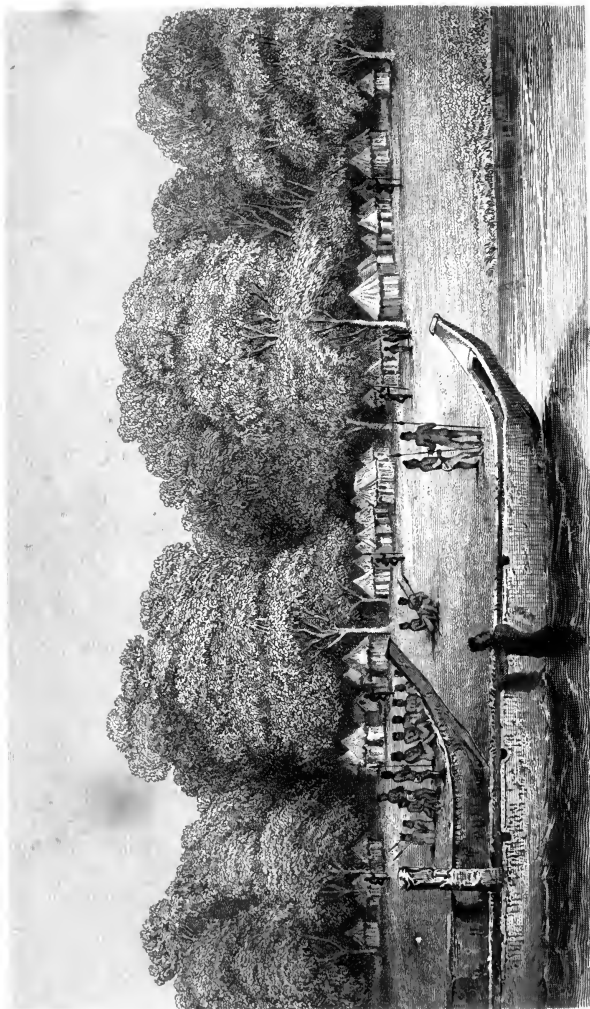
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AFRICA, NIGER RIVER, 1847, BY J. H. COLE, F.R.S.

A. H. COLE, F.R.S.



# CENTRAL AFRICA.

BAYARD TAYLOR.



The Ethiopian Nile.

NEW YORK: G. P. PUTNAM.

1850.



A

# JOURNEY TO CENTRAL AFRICA;

OR,

LIFE AND LANDSCAPES FROM EGYPT  
TO THE NEGRO KINGDOMS OF  
THE WHITE NILE.

BY

BAYARD TAYLOR.

With a Map and Illustrations by the Author.

TENTH EDITION.

NEW YORK:  
G. P. PUTNAM, 506 BROADWAY.

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1859.



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R. CRAIGHEAD,  
Printer, Stereotyper, and Electrotyper,  
Carlton Building,  
81, 83, and 85 Centre Street.

Dedicated to  
A. B.  
OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA  
BY  
HIS FELLOW-TRAVELLER IN EGYPT.  
B. T.





## P R E F A C E .

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THERE is an old Italian proverb, which says a man has lived to no purpose, unless he has either built a house, begotten a son, or written a book. As I have already complied more than once with the latter of these requisitions, I must seek to justify the present repetition thereof, on other grounds. My reasons for offering this volume to the public are, simply, that there is room for it. It is the record of a journey which led me, for the most part, over fresh fields, by paths which comparatively few had trodden before me. Although I cannot hope to add much to the general stock of information concerning Central Africa, I may serve, at least, as an additional witness, to confirm or illustrate the evidence of others. Hence, the preparation of this work has appeared to me rather in the light

of a duty than a diversion, and I have endeavored to impart as much instruction as amusement to the reader. While seeking to give correct pictures of the rich, adventurous life into which I was thrown, I have resisted the temptation to yield myself up to its more subtle and poetic aspects. My aim has been to furnish a faithful narrative of my own experience, believing that none of those embellishments which the imagination so readily furnishes, can equal the charm of the unadorned truth.

There are a few words of further explanation which I wish to say. The journey was undertaken solely for the purpose of restoring a frame exhausted by severe mental labor. A previous experience of a tropical climate convinced me that I should best accomplish my object by a visit to Egypt, and as I had a whole winter before me, I determined to penetrate as far into the interior of Africa as the time would allow, attracted less by the historical and geographical interest of those regions than by the desire to participate in their free, vigorous, semi-barbaric life. If it had been my intention, as some of my friends supposed, to search for the undiscovered sources of the White Nile, I should not have turned back, until the aim was accomplished or all means had failed.

I am aware that, by including in this work my journey through Egypt, I have gone over much ground



which is already familiar. Egypt, however, was the vestibule through which I passed to Ethiopia and the kingdoms beyond, and I have not been able to omit my impressions of that country without detracting from the completeness of the narrative. This book is the record of a single journey, which, both in its character and in the circumstances that suggested and accompanied it, occupies a separate place in my memory. Its performance was one uninterrupted enjoyment, for, whatever the privations to which it exposed me, they were neutralized by the physical delight of restored health and by a happy confidence in the successful issue of the journey, which never forsook me. It is therefore but just to say, that the pictures I have drawn may seem over-bright to others who may hereafter follow me ; and I should warn all such that they must expect to encounter many troubles and annoyances.

Although I have described somewhat minutely the antiquities of Nubia and Ethiopia which I visited, and have not been insensible to the interest which every traveller in Egypt must feel in the remains of her ancient art, I have aimed at giving representations of the living races which inhabit those countries rather than the old ones which have passed away. I have taken it for granted that the reader will feel more interested—as I was—in a live Arab, than a dead

Pharaoh. I am indebted wholly to the works of Champollion, Wilkinson and Lepsius for whatever allusions I have made to the age and character of the Egyptian ruins.

B. T.

NEW YORK, July, 1854.

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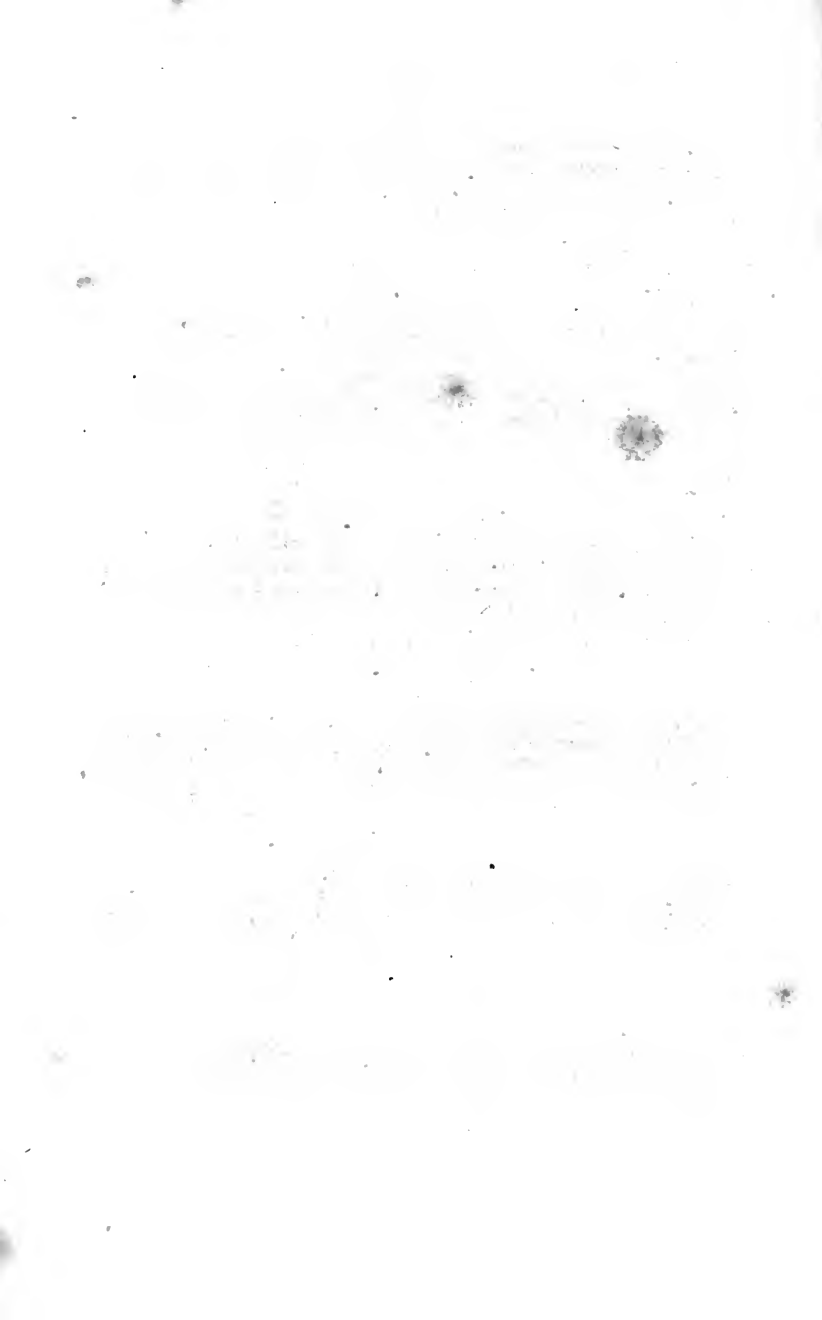
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MODERN ORIENTAL COSTUME



# JOURNEY TO CENTRAL AFRICA.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION TO AFRICA.

Arrival at Alexandria—The Landing—My First Oriental Bath—The City—Preparations for Departure.

I LEFT Smyrna in the Lloyd steamer, *Conte Stürmer*, on the first day of November, 1851. We passed the blue Sporadic Isles—Cos, and Rhodes, and Karpathos—and crossing the breadth of the Eastern Mediterranean, favored all the way by unruffled seas, and skies of perfect azure, made the pharos of Alexandria on the evening of the 3d. The entrance to the harbor is a narrow and difficult passage through reefs, and no vessel dares to attempt it at night, but with the first streak of dawn we were boarded by an Egyptian pilot, and the rising sun lighted up for us the white walls of the city, the windmills of the Ras el-Tin, or Cape of Figs, and the low yellow sand-hills in which I recognized Africa—for they were prophetic of the desert behind them.

We entered the old harbor between the island of Pharos and the main land (now connected by a peninsular strip, on which the Frank quarter is built), soon after sunrise

The water swarmed with boats before the anchor dropped, and the Egyptian health officer had no sooner departed than we were boarded by a crowd of dragomen, hotel runners, and boatmen. A squinting Arab, who wore a white dress and red sash, accosted me in Italian, offering to conduct me to the Oriental Hotel. A German and a Smyrniote, whose acquaintance I had made during the voyage, joined me in accepting his services, and we were speedily boated ashore. We landed on a pile of stones, not far from a mean-looking edifice called the Custom-House. Many friends were there to welcome us, and I shall never forget the eagerness with which they dragged us ashore, and the zeal with which they pomelled one another in their generous efforts to take charge of our effects. True, we could have wished that their faces had been better washed, their baggy trousers less ragged and their red caps less greasy, and we were perhaps ungrateful in allowing our Arab to rate them soundly and cuff the ears of the more obstreperous, before our trunks and carpet-bags could be portioned among them. At the Custom-House we were visited by two dark gentlemen, in turbans and black flowing robes, who passed our baggage without scrutiny, gently whispering in our ears, "*backsheesh*,"—a word which we then heard for the first time, but which was to be the key-note of much of our future experience. The procession of porters was then set in motion, and we passed through several streets of whitewashed two story houses, to the great square of the Frank quarter, which opened before us warm and brilliant in the morning sunshine.

The principal hotels and consulates front on this square. The architecture is Italian, with here and there a dash of Sar-

acenic, in the windows and doorways, especially in new buildings. A small obelisk of alabaster, a present from Mohammed Ali, stands in the centre, on a pedestal which was meant for a fountain, but has no water. All this I noted, as well as a crowd of donkeys and donkey-boys, and a string of laden camels, on our way to the hotel, which we found to be a long and not particularly clean edifice, on the northern side of the square. The English and French steamers had just arrived, and no rooms were to be had until after the departure of the afternoon boat for Cairo. Our dragoman, who called himself Ibrahim, suggested a bath as the most agreeable means of passing the intermediate time.

The clear sky, the temperature (like that of a mild July day at home), and the novel interest of the groups in the streets, were sufficient to compensate for any annoyance: but when we reached the square of the French Church, and saw a garden of palm-trees waving their coronals of glittering leaves, every thing else was forgotten. My German friend, who had never seen palms, except as starveling exotics in Sorrento and Smyrna, lifted his hands in rapture, and even I, who had heard tens of thousands rustle in the hot winds of the Tropics, felt my heart leap as if their beauty were equally new to my eyes. For no amount of experience can deprive the traveller of that happy feeling of novelty which marks his first day on the soil of a new continent. I gave myself up wholly to its inebriation. *Et ego in Africâ*, was the sum of my thoughts, and I neither saw nor cared to know the fact (which we discovered in due time), that our friend Ibrahim was an arrant knave.

The bath to which he conducted us was pronounced to be

the finest in Alexandria, the most superb in all the Orient, but it did not at all accord with our ideas of Eastern luxury. Moreover, the bath-keeper was his intimate friend, and would bathe us as no Christians were ever bathed before. One fact Ibrahim kept to himself, which was, that his intimate friend and he shared the spoils of our inexperience. We were conducted to a one-story building, of very unprepossessing exterior. As we entered the low, vaulted entrance, my ears were saluted with a dolorous, groaning sound, which I at first conjectured to proceed from the persons undergoing the operation, but which I afterward ascertained was made by a wheel turned by a buffalo, employed in raising water from the well. In a sort of basement hall, smelling of soap-suds, and with a large tank of dirty water in the centre, we were received by the bath-keeper, who showed us into a room containing three low divans with pillows. Here we disrobed, and Ibrahim, who had procured a quantity of napkins, enveloped our heads in turbans and swathed our loins in a simple Adamite garment. Heavy wooden clogs were attached to our feet, and an animated bronze statue led the way through gloomy passages, sometimes hot and steamy, sometimes cold and soapy, and redolent of any thing but the spicy odors of Araby the Blest, to a small vaulted chamber, lighted by a few apertures in the ceiling. The moist heat was almost suffocating; hot water flowed over the stone floor, and the stone benches we sat upon were somewhat cooler than kitchen stoves. The bronze individual left us, and very soon, sweating at every pore, we began to think of the three Hebrews in the furnace. Our comfort was not increased by the groaning sound which we still heard and by seeing, through a hole in the door, five or six naked



figures lying motionless along the edge of a steaming vat, in the outer room.

Presently our statue returned with a pair of coarse hair-gloves on his hands. He snatched off our turbans, and then, seizing one of my friends by the shoulder as if he had been a sheep, began a sort of rasping operation upon his back. This process, varied occasionally by a dash of scalding water, was extended to each of our three bodies, and we were then suffered to rest awhile. A course of soap-suds followed, which was softer and more pleasant in its effect, except when he took us by the hair, and holding back our heads, scrubbed our faces most lustily, as if there were no such things as eyes, noses and mouths. By this time we had reached such a salamandrine temperature that the final operation of a dozen pailfuls of hot water poured over the head, was really delightful. After a plunge in a seething tank, we were led back to our chamber and enveloped in loose muslin robes. Turbans were bound on our heads and we lay on the divans to recover from the languor of the bath. The change produced by our new costume was astonishing. The stout German became a Turkish molah, the young Smyrniote a picturesque Persian, and I—I scarcely know what, but, as my friends assured me, a much better Moslem than Frank. Cups of black coffee, and pipes of inferior tobacco completed the process, and in spite of the lack of cleanliness and superabundance of fleas, we went forth lighter in body, and filled with a calm content which nothing seemed able to disturb.

After a late breakfast at the hotel, we sallied out for a survey of the city. The door was beleaguered by the donkeys and their attendant drivers, who hailed us in all languages at

once. "*Venez, Monsieur!*" "Take a ride, sir; here is a good donkey!" "*Schæner Esel!*" "*Prendete il mio burrico!*"—and you are made the vortex of a whirlpool of donkeys. The one-eyed donkey-boys fight, the donkeys kick, and there is no rest till you have bestridden one of the little beasts. The driver then gives his tail a twist and his rump a thwack, and you are carried off in triumph. The animal is so small that you seem the more silly of the two, when you have mounted, but after he has carried you for an hour in a rapid gallop, you recover your dignity in your respect for him.

The spotless blue of the sky and the delicious elasticity of the air were truly intoxicating, as we galloped between gardens of date-trees, laden with ripe fruit, to the city gate, and through it into a broad road, fringed with acacias, leading to the Mahmoudieh canal. But to the south, on a rise of dry, sandy soil, stood the Pillar of Diocletian—not of Pompey, whose name it bears. It is a simple column, ninety-eight feet in height, but the shaft is a single block of red granite, and stands superbly against the back-ground of such a sky and such a sea. It is the only relic of the ancient Alexandria worthy of its fame, but you could not wish for one more imposing and eloquent. The glowing white houses of the town, the minarets, the palms and the acacias fill the landscape, but it stands apart from them, in the sand, and looks only to the sea and the desert.

In the evening we took donkeys again and rode out of the town to a café on the banks of the canal. A sunset of burning rose and orange sank over the desert behind Pompey's Pillar, and the balmiest of breezes stole towards us from the sea, through palm gardens. A Swiss gentleman, M. de Gon-

zenbach, whose kindness I shall always gratefully remember accompanied us. As we sat under the acacias, sipping the black Turkish coffee, the steamer for Cairo passed, disturbing the serenity of the air with its foul smoke, and marring the delicious repose of the landscape in such wise, that we vowed we would have nothing to do with steam so long as we voyaged on the Nile. Our donkey-drivers patiently held the bridles of our long-eared chargers till we were ready to return. It was dark, and not seeing at first my attendant, a little one-eyed imp, I called at random: "Abdallah!" This, it happened, was actually his name, and he came trotting up, holding the stirrup ready for me to mount. The quickness with which these young Arabs pick up languages, is truly astonishing. "*Come vi chiamate?*" (what's your name?) I asked of Abdallah, as we rode homeward. The words were new to him, but I finally made him understand their meaning, whereupon he put his knowledge into practice by asking me: "*Come vi chiamate?*" "Abbas Pasha," I replied. "Oh, well," was his prompt rejoinder, "if you are Abbas Pasha, then I am Seyd Pasha." The next morning he was at the door with his donkey, which I fully intended to mount, but became entangled in a wilderness of donkeys, out of which Ibrahim extricated me by hoisting me on another animal. As I rode away, I caught a glimpse of the little fellow, crying lustily over his disappointment.

We three chance companions fraternized so agreeably that we determined to hire a boat for Cairo, in preference to waiting for the next steamer. We accordingly rode over to the Mahmoudieh Canal, accompanied by Ibrahim, to inspect the barks. Like all dragomen, Ibrahim had his private preferences, and

conducted us on board a boat belonging to a friend of his, a grizzly raïs, or captain. The craft was a small *kangia*, with a large lateen sail at the bow and a little one at the stern. It was not very new, but looked clean, and the raïs demanded three hundred piastres for the voyage. The piastre is the current coin of the East. Its value is fluctuating, and always higher in Egypt than in Syria and Turkey, but may be assumed at about five cents, or twenty to the American dollar. Before closing the bargain, we asked the advice of M. de Gonzenbach, who immediately despatched his Egyptian servant and engaged a boat at two hundred and twenty-five piastres. Every thing was to be in readiness for our departure on the following evening.

## CHAPTER II.

## FIRST VOYAGE ON THE NILE.

Departure—The Kangia—The Egyptian Climate—The Mahmoudieh Canal—Entrance into the Nile—Pleasures of the Journey—Studying Arabic—Sight of the Pyramids—The Barrage—Approach to Cairo.

WE paid a most exorbitant bill at the Oriental Hotel, and started on donkeyback for our boat, at sunset. Our preparations for the voyage consisted of bread, rice, coffee, sugar, butter and a few other comestibles; an earthen furnace and charcoal; pots and stew-pans, plates, knives and forks, wooden spoons, coffee-cups and water-jars; three large mats of cane-leaves, for bedding; and for luxuries, a few bottles of claret, and a gazelle-skin stuffed with choice Latakiah tobacco. We were prudent enough to take a supper with us from the hotel, and not trust to our own cooking the first night on board.

We waited till dark on the banks of the Canal before our baggage appeared. There is a Custom-House on all sides of Alexandria, and goods going out must pay as well as goods coming in. The gate was closed, and nothing less than the silver oil of a dollar greased its hinges sufficiently for our cart to pass through. But what was our surprise on reaching the boat, to find the same *kangia* and the same grizzly raïs, who had previously demanded three hundred piastres. He seemed no less

astonished than we, for the bargain had been made by a third party, and I believe he bore us a grudge during the rest of the voyage. The contract placed the boat at our disposition; so we went on board immediately, bade adieu to the kind friends who had accompanied us, and were rowed down the Canal in the full glow of African moonlight.

Some account of our vessel and crew will not be out of place here. The boat was about thirty-five feet in length, with a short upright mast in the bow, supporting a lateen sail fifty feet long. Against the mast stood a square wooden box, lined with clay, which served as a fireplace for cooking. The middle boards of the deck were loose and allowed entrance to the hold, where our baggage was stowed. The sailors also lifted then, and sat on the cross-beams, with their feet on the shallow keel, when they used the oars. The cabin, which occupied the stern of the boat, was built above and below the deck, so that after stepping down into it we could stand upright. The first compartment contained two broad benches, with a smaller chamber in the rear, allowing just enough room, in all, for three persons to sleep. We spread our mats on the boards, placed carpet-bags for pillows (first taking out the books), and our beds were made. Ibrahim slept on the deck, against the cabin-door.

Our raïs, or captain, was an old Arab, with a black, wrinkled face, a grizzly beard and a tattered blue robe. There were five sailors—one with crooked eyes, one with a moustache, two copper-colored Fellahs, and one tall Nubian, black as the Egyptian darkness. The three latter were our favorites, and more cheerful and faithful creatures I never saw. One of the Fellahs sang nasal love-songs the whole day long, and was al-

ways foremost in the everlasting refrain of "*haylee-sah!*" and "*ya salaam!*" with which the Egyptian sailors row and tow and pole their boats against the current. Before we left the boat we had acquired a kind of affection for these three men, while the raïs, with his grim face and croaking voice, grew more repulsive every day.

We spread a mat on the deck, lighted our lantern and sat down to supper, while a gentle north wind slowly carried our boat along through shadows of palms and clear spaces of moonlight. Ibrahim filled the shebooks, and for four hours we sat in the open air, which seemed to grow sweeter and purer with every breath we inhaled. We were a triad—the sacred number—and it would have been difficult to find another triad so harmonious and yet differing so strongly in its parts. One was a *Landwirth* from Saxe-Coburg, a man of forty-five, tall, yet portly in person, and accustomed to the most comfortable living and the best society in Germany. Another was a Smyrniote merchant, a young man of thirty, to whom all parts of Europe were familiar, who spoke eight languages, and who within four months had visited Ispahan and the Caucasus. Of the third it behooves me not to speak, save that he was from the New World, and that he differed entirely from his friends in stature, features, station in life, and every thing else but mutual goodfellowship. "Ah," said the German in the fulness of his heart, as we basked in the moonlight, "what a heavenly air! what beautiful palms! and this wonderful repose in all Nature, which I never felt before!" "It is better than the gardens of Ispahan," added the Smyrniote. Nor did I deceive them when I said that for many months past I had known no mood of mind so peaceful and grateful.

We rose somewhat stiff from our hard beds, but a cup of coffee and the fresh morning air restored the amenity of the voyage. The banks of the Canal are flat and dull, and the country through which we passed, after leaving the marshy brink of Lake Mareotis, was in many places still too wet from the recent inundation to be ploughed for the winter crops. It is a dead level of rich black loam, and produces rice, maize, sugarcane and millet. Here and there the sand has blown over it, and large spaces are given up to a sort of coarse, wiry grass. The villages are miserable collections of mud huts, but the date-palms which shadow them and the strings of camels that slowly pass to and fro, render even their unsightliness picturesque. In two or three places we passed mud machines, driven by steam, for the purpose of cleaning the Canal. Ropes were stretched across the channel on both sides, and a large number of trading boats were obliged to halt, although the wind was very favorable. The barrier was withdrawn for us Franks, and the courteous engineer touched his tarboosh in reply to our salutations, as we shot through.

Towards noon we stopped at a village, and the Asian went ashore with Ibrahim to buy provisions, while the European walked ahead with his fowling-piece, to shoot wild ducks for dinner. The American stayed on board and studied an Arabic vocabulary. Presently Ibrahim appeared with two fowls, two pigeons, a pot of milk and a dozen eggs. The Asian set about preparing breakfast, and showed himself so skilful that our bark soon exhaled the most savory odors. When we picked up our European he had only two hawks to offer us, but we gave him in return a breakfast which he declared perfect. We ate on deck, seated on a mat; a pleasant wind filled our sails,



and myriads of swallows circled and twittered over our heads in the cloudless air. The calm, contemplative state produced by the coffee and pipes which Ibrahim brought us, lasted the whole afternoon, and the villages, the cane-fields, the Moslem oratories, the wide level of the Delta and the distant mounds of forgotten cities, passed before our eyes like the pictures of a dream. Only one of these pictures marred the serenity of our minds. It was an Arab burying-ground, on the banks of the Canal—a collection of heaps of mud, baked in the sun. At the head and foot of one of the most recent, sat two women—paid mourners—who howled and sobbed, in long, piteous, despairing cries, which were most painful to hear. I should never have imagined that any thing but the keenest grief could teach such heart-breaking sounds.

When I climbed the bank at sunset, for a walk, the minarets of Atfeh, on the Nile, were visible. Two rows of acacias, planted along the Canal, formed a pleasant arcade, through which we sailed, to the muddy excrescences of the town. The locks were closed for the night, and we were obliged to halt, which gave us an opportunity of witnessing an Arabic marriage procession. The noise of two wooden drums and a sort of fife announced the approach of the bride, who, attended by her relatives, came down the bank from the mud-ovens above. She was closely veiled, but the Arabs crowded around to get a peep at her face. No sooner had the three Franks approached, than she was doubly guarded and hurried off to the house of her intended husband. Some time afterwards I ascended the bank to have a nearer view of the miserable hovels, but was received with such outcries and menacing gestures, that I made a slow and dignified retreat. We visited, however, the house of the

bridegroom's father, where twenty or thirty Arabs, seated on the ground, were singing an epithalamium, to which they kept time by clapping their hands.

Next morning, while our raïs was getting his permit to pass the locks (for which four official signatures and a fee of thirty piastres are necessary), we visited the bazaar, and purchased long tubes of jasmine-wood for our pipes, and vegetables for our kitchen. On all such occasions we detailed Seyd, the tall Nubian, whose ebony face shone resplendent under a snow-white turban, to be our attendant. The stately gravity with which he walked behind us, carrying bread and vegetables, was worthy the pipe-bearer of a Sultan. By this time we had installed the Asian as cook, and he very cheerfully undertook the service. We soon discovered that the skill of Ibrahim extended no further than to the making of a *pilaff* and the preparation of coffee. Moreover his habits and appearance were not calculated to make us relish his handiwork. The naïveté with which he took the wash-basin to make soup in, and wiped our knives and forks on his own baggy pantaloons, would have been very amusing if we had not been interested parties. The Asian was one day crumbling some loaf sugar with a hammer, when Ibrahim, who had been watching him, suddenly exclaimed in a tone of mingled pity and contempt, "that's not the way!" Thereupon he took up some of the lumps, and wrapped them in one corner of his long white shirt, which he thrust into his mouth, and after crushing the sugar between his teeth, emptied it into the bowl with an air of triumph.

A whole squadron of boats was waiting at the locks, but with Frankish impudence, we pushed through them, and took our place in the front rank. The sun was intensely hot, and

we sweated and broiled for a full hour, in the midst of a horrible tumult of Arabs, before the clumsy officers closed the last gate on us and let us float forth on the Nile. It is the western, or Canopic branch of the river which flows past Atfeh. It is not broader than the Hudson at Albany, but was more muddy and slimy from its recent overflow than the Mississippi at New Orleans. Its water is no less sweet and wholesome than that of the latter river. After leaving the monotonous banks of the Canal, the aspect of its shores, fringed with groves of palm, was unspeakably cheerful and inspiring. On the opposite side, the slender white minarets of Fooah, once a rich manufacturing town, sparkled in the noonday sun. A fresh north wind from the Mediterranean slowly pressed our boat against the strong current, while the heavily-laden merchant vessels followed in our wake, their two immense lateen sails expanded like the wings of the Arabian roc. We drank to the glory of old Father Nile in a cup of his own brown current, and then called Ibrahim to replenish the empty shebooks. Those who object to tobacco under the form of cigars, or are nauseated by the fumes of a German meerschaum, should be told that the Turkish pipe, filled with Latakieh, is quite another thing. The aroma, which you inhale through a long jasmine tube, topped with a soft amber mouth-piece, is as fragrant as roses and refreshing as ripe dates. I have no doubt that the atmosphere of celestial musk and amber which surrounded Mahomet, according to the Persian Chronicles, was none other than genuine Latakieh, at twenty piastres the oka. One thing is certain, that without the capacity to smoke a shebook, no one can taste the true flavor of the Orient.

An hour or two after sunset the wind fell, and for the rest

of the night our men tracked the boat slowly forward, singing cheerily as they tugged at the long tow-rope. The Asian spread on the deck his Albanian capote, the European his ample travelling cloak, and the representatives of three Continents, travelling in the fourth, lay on their backs enjoying the moonlight, the palms, and more than all, the perfect silence and repose. With every day of our journey I felt more deeply and gratefully this sense of rest. Under such a glorious sky, no disturbance seemed possible. It was of little consequence whether the boat went forward or backward, whether we struck on a sand-bar or ploughed the water under a full head of wind; every thing was right. My conscience made me no reproach for such a lazy life. In America we live too fast and work too hard, I thought: shall I not know what Rest is, once before I die? The European said to me naïvely, one day: "I am a little surprised, but very glad, that no one of us has yet spoken of European politics." Europe! I had forgotten that such a land existed: and as for America, it seemed very dim and distant.

Sometimes I varied this repose by trying to pick up the language. Wilkinson's Vocabulary and Capt. Hayes's Grammar did me great service, and after I had tried a number of words with Ibrahim, to get the pronunciation, I made bolder essays. One day when the sailors were engaged in a most vociferous discussion, I broke upon them with: "What is all this noise about? stop instantly!" The effect was instantaneous; the men were silent, and Seyd, turning up his eyes in wonder, cried out: "*Wallah!* the Howadji talks Arabic!" The two copper-faced Fellahs thought it very amusing, and every new word I learned sufficed to set them laughing for half

an hour. I called out to a fisherman, seated on the bank: "O Fisherman, have you any fish?" and he held up a string of them and made answer: "O Howadji, I have." This solemn form of address, which is universal in Arabic, makes the language very piquant to a student.

During our second night on the river, we passed the site of ancient Saïs, one of the most renowned of Egyptian cities, which has left nothing but a few shapeless mounds. The country was in many places still wet from the inundation, which was the largest that had occurred for many years. The Fellahs were ploughing for wheat, with a single buffalo geared to a sharp pole, which scratched up the soil to the depth of three inches. Fields of maize and sugar-cane were frequent, and I noticed also some plantations of tobacco, millet, and a species of lupin, which is cultivated for its beans. The only vegetables we found for sale in the villages, were onions, leeks and tomatoes. Milk, butter and eggs are abundant and very good, but the cheese of the country is detestable. The habitations resemble ant-hills, rather than human dwellings, and the villages are dépôts of filth and vermin, on the most magnificent scale. Our boat was fortunately free from the latter, except a few cockroaches. Except the palm and acacia, without which a Nile journey would lose half its attractions, I saw few trees. Here and there stood a group of superb plane-trees, and the banana sometimes appeared in the gardens, but there is nothing of that marvellous luxuriance and variety of vegetation which is elsewhere exhibited in the neighborhood of the Tropics.

On the evening of the third day we reached the town of Nadir, and, as there was no wind, went ashore for an hour or two. There was a café on the bank—a mud house, with two

windows, adorned with wooden frames, carved in the Moorish style. A divan, built of clay and whitewashed, extended along one side of the room, and on this we seated ourselves cross-legged, while the host prepared the little coffee-cups and filled the pipes. Through the open door we saw the Nile, gleaming broadly under the full moon, and in the distance, two tall palm-trees stood clearly against the sky. Our boatmen, whom we had treated to *booza*, the Egyptian beer, sat before us, and joined in the chorus of a song, which was sung to entertain us. The performers were three women, and a man who played a coarse reed flute. One of the women had a tambourine, another a small wooden drum, and the third kept time by slapping the closed fingers of the right hand on the palm of the left. The song, which had a wild, rude harmony that pleased me, was followed by a dance, executed by one of the women. It was very similar to the fandango, as danced by the natives of the Isthmus of Panama, and was more lascivious than graceful. The women, however, were of the lowest class, and their performances were adapted to the taste of the boatmen and camel-drivers, by whom they are patronized.

The next day the yellow hills of the Libyan Desert, which in some places press the arable land of the Delta even to the brink of the Nile, appeared in the west. The sand appeared to be steadily advancing towards the river, and near Werdan had already buried a grove of acacias as high as their first branches. The tops were green and flourishing above the deluge, but another year or two would overwhelm them completely. We had a thick fog during the night, and the following day was exceedingly hot though the air was transparent as crystal. Our three faces were already of the color of new

bronze, which was burned into the skin by the reflection from the water. While my friends were enjoying their usual afternoon repose, a secret presentiment made me climb to the roof of our cabin. I had not sat there long, before I descried two faint blue triangles on the horizon, far to the south. I rudely broke in upon their indolence with a shout of "the Pyramids!" which Seyd echoed with "*El-hàram Faraoon!*" I was as much impressed with the view as I expected to be, but I completely nullified the European's emotion by translating to him Thackeray's description of his first sight of those renowned monuments.

The same evening we reached the northern point of the Delta, where we were obliged to remain all night, as the wind was not sufficiently strong to allow us to pass the *Barrage*. Singularly enough, this immense work, which is among the greatest undertakings of modern times, is scarcely heard of out of Egypt. It is nothing less than a damming of the Nile, which is to have the effect of producing two inundations a year, and doubling the crops throughout the Delta. Here, where the flood divides itself into two main branches, which find separate mouths at Damietta and Rosetta, an immense dam has not only been projected, but is far advanced toward completion. Each branch will be spanned by sixty-two arches, besides a central gateway ninety feet in breadth, and flanked by lofty stone towers. The point of the Delta, between the two dams, is protected by a curtain of solid masonry, and the abutments which it joins are fortified by towers sixty or seventy feet in height. The piers have curved breakwaters on the upper side, while the opposite parapet of the arches rises high above them, so that the dam consists of three successive ter-

paces, and presents itself like a wedge, against the force of such an immense body of water. The material is brick, faced with stone. When complete, it is intended to close the side-arches during low water, leaving only the central gateway open. . By this means sufficient water will be gained to fill all the irrigating canals, while a new channel, cut through the centre of the Delta, will render productive a vast tract of fertile land. The project is a grand one, and the only obstacle to its success is the light, porous character of the alluvial soil on which the piers are founded. The undertaking was planned and commenced by M. Linant, and has since been continued by other engineers.

The Egyptian boatmen have reason to complain of the Barrage. The main force of the river is poured through the narrow space wherein the piers have not yet been sunk, which cannot be passed without a strong north wind. Forty or fifty boats were lying along the shore, waiting the favorable moment. We obtained permission from the engineer to attach our boat to a large government barge, which was to be drawn up by a stationary windlass. As we put off, the wind freshened, and we were slowly urged against the current to the main rapid, where we were obliged to hold on to our big friend. Behind us the river was white with sails—craft of all kinds, pushed up by the wind, dragged down by the water, striking against each other, entangling their long sails and crowding into the narrow passage, amid shouts, cries and a bewildering profusion of Arabic gutturals. For half an hour, the scene was most exciting, but thanks to the windlass, we reached smoother water, and sailed off gayly for Cairo.

The true Nile expanded before us, nearly two miles in



width. To the south, the three Pyramids of Gizeh loomed up like isolated mountain-peaks on the verge of the Desert. On the right hand the Mokattam Hills lay red and bare in the sunshine, and ere long, over the distant gardens of Shoo-bra, we caught sight of the Citadel of Cairo, and the minarets of the mosque of Sultan Hassan. The north wind was faithful: at three o'clock we were anchored in Boulak, paid our raïs, gave the crew a backsheesh, for which they kissed our hands with many exclamations of "*taïb!*" (good!) and set out for Cairo.

## CHAPTER III.

## PICTURES OF CAIRO.

Entrance—The Ezbekiyeh—Saracenic Houses—Donkeys—The Bazaars—The Streets  
—Processions—View from the Citadel—Mosque of Mohammed Ali—The Road to  
Suez—The Island of Rhoda.

OUR approach to and entrance into Cairo was the illuminated frontispiece to the volume of my Eastern life. From the Nile we had already seen the mosque of Sultan Hassan, the white domes, and long, pencil-like minarets of the new mosque of Mohammed Ali, and the massive masonry of the Citadel, crowning a projecting spur of the Mokattam Hills, which touches the city on the eastern side. But when, mounted on ambling donkeys, we followed the laden baggage-horses through the streets of Boulak, and entered the broad, shaded highway leading through gardens, grain-fields and groves of palm and banana, to the gate of the *Ezbekiyeh*—the great square of Cairo—the scene, which, at a distance, had been dimmed and softened by the filmy screen of the Egyptian air, now became so gay, picturesque and animated, so full of life and motion and color, that my dreams of the East were at once displaced by the vivid reality. The donkey-riding multitudes who passed continually to and fro, were wholly unlike

the crowds of Smyrna and Alexandria, where the growing influence of European dress and customs is already visible. Here, every thing still exhaled the rich aroma of the Orient, as it had been wafted to me from the Thousand and One Nights, the Persian poets and the Arab chroniclers. I forgot that I still wore a Frank dress, and found myself wondering at the temerity of the few Europeans we met. I looked without surprise on the long processions of donkeys carrying water-skins, the heavily-laden camels, the women with white masks on their faces and black bags around their bodies, the stolid Nubian slaves, the grave Abyssinians, and all the other various characters that passed and repassed us. But because they were so familiar, they were none the less interesting, for all had been acquaintances, when, like Tennyson, "true Mussulman was I, and sworn," under the reign of the good Haroun Al-Raschid.

We entered the Ezbekiyeh, which is wholly overgrown with majestic acacias and plane-trees, and thickets of aromatic flowering shrubs. It is in the Frank quarter of the city, and was first laid out and planted by order of Mohammed Ali. All the principal hotels front upon it, and light, thatched cafés fill the space under the plane-trees, where the beau monde of Cairo promenade every Sunday evening. Nothing of the old City of the Caliphs, except a few tall minarets, can be seen from this quarter, but the bowery luxuriance of the foliage is all that the eye demands, and over the plain white walls, on every side, the palms—single, or in friendly groups—lift their feathery crowns. After installing our household gods in the chambers of the quiet and comfortable Hotel d'Europe, we went out to enjoy the sweet evening air in front of one of the cafés. I

tried for the first time the narghileh, or Persian water-pipe. The soft, velvety leaves of the tobacco of Shiraz are burned in a small cup, the tube of which enters a glass vase, half filled with rose-scented water. From the top of this vase issues a flexible tube, several feet in length, with a mouth-piece of wood or amber. At each inspiration, the smoke is drawn downward and rises through the water with a pleasant bubbling sound. It is deprived of all the essential oil of the weed, and is exceedingly mild, cool and fragrant. But instead of being puffed out of the mouth in whiffs, it is breathed full into the lungs and out again, like the common air. This is not so difficult a matter as might be supposed; the sensation is pleasant and slightly exhilarating, and is not injurious to the lungs when moderately indulged in.

The Turkish quarter of Cairo still retains the picturesque Saracenic architecture of the times of the Caliphs. The houses are mostly three stories in height, each story projecting over the other, and the plain stone walls are either whitewashed or striped with horizontal red bars, in a manner which would be absurd under a northern sky, but which is here singularly harmonious and agreeable. The only signs of sculpture are occasional door-ways with richly carved arches, or the light marble gallery surrounding a fountained court. I saw a few of these in retired parts of the city. The traveller, however, has an exhaustless source of delight in the wooden balconies inclosing the upper windows. The extraordinary lightness, grace and delicate fragility of their workmanship, rendered still more striking by contrast with the naked solidity of the walls to which they cling, gave me a new idea of the skill and fancy of the Saracenic architects. The wood seems rather woven in

the loom, than cut with the saw and chisel. Through these lattices of fine network, with borders worked in lace-like patterns, and sometimes topped with slender turrets and pinnacles, the wives of the Cairene merchants sit and watch the crowds passing softly to and fro in the twilight of the bazaars, themselves unseen. It needed no effort of the imagination to people the fairy watch-towers under which we rode daily, with forms as beautiful as those which live in the voluptuous melodies of Hafiz.

To see Cairo thoroughly, one must first accustom himself to the ways of those long-eared cabs, without the use of which I would advise no one to trust himself in the bazaars. Donkey-riding is universal, and no one thinks of going beyond the Frank quarter on foot. If he does, he must submit to be followed by not less than six donkeys with their drivers. A friend of mine, who was attended by such a cavalcade for two hours, was obliged to yield at last, and made no second attempt. When we first appeared in the gateway of our hotel, equipped for an excursion, the rush of men and animals was so great, that we were forced to retreat until our servant and the porter whipped us a path through the yelling and braying mob. After one or two trials, I found an intelligent Arab boy, named Kish, who, for five piastres a day, furnished strong and ambitious donkeys, which he kept ready at the door from morning till night. The other drivers respected Kish's privilege, and thenceforth I had no trouble. The donkeys are so small that my feet nearly touched the ground, but there is no end to their strength and endurance. Their gait, whether a pace or a gallop, is so easy and light that fatigue is impossible. The drivers take great pride in having high-cushioned red saddles, and

in hanging bits of jingling brass to the bridles. They keep their donkeys close shorn, and frequently beautify them by painting them various colors. The first animal I rode had legs barred like a zebra's, and my friend's rejoiced in purple flanks and a yellow belly. The drivers run behind them with a short stick, punching them from time to time, or giving them a sharp pinch on the rump. Very few of them own their donkeys, and I understood their pertinacity when I learned that they frequently received a beating on returning home in the evening empty-handed.

The passage of the bazaars seems at first quite as hazardous on donkey-back as on foot, but it is the difference between knocking somebody down and being knocked down yourself, and one naturally prefers the former alternative. There is no use in attempting to guide the donkey, for he won't be guided. The driver shouts behind, and you are dashed at full speed into a confusion of other donkeys, camels, horses, carts, water-carriers and footmen. In vain you cry out: "*Bess!*" (enough!) "*Piano!*" and other desperate adjurations; the driver's only reply is: "Let the bridle hang loose!" You dodge your head under a camel-load of planks; your leg brushes the wheel of a dust-cart; you strike a fat Turk plump in the back; you miraculously escape upsetting a fruit-stand; you scatter a company of spectral, white-masked women, and at last reach some more quiet street, with the sensation of a man who has stormed a battery. At first this sort of riding made me very nervous, but finally I let the donkey go his own way, and took a curious interest in seeing how near a chance I ran of striking or being struck. Sometimes there seemed no hope of avoiding a violent collision, but by a series of the most remarkable dodges he gen-

erally carried me through in safety. The cries of the driver running behind, gave me no little amusement: "The Howadji comes! Take care on the right hand! take care on the left hand! O man, take care! O maiden, take care! O boy, get out of the way! The Howadji comes!" Kish had strong lungs and his donkey would let nothing pass him, and so, wherever we went, we contributed our full share to the universal noise and confusion.

Cairo is the cleanest of all oriental cities. The regulations established by Mohammed Ali are strictly carried out. Each man is obliged to sweep before his own door, and the dirt is carried away in carts every morning. Besides this, the streets are watered several times a day, and are nearly always cool and free from dust. The constant evaporation of the water, however, is said to be injurious to the eyes of the inhabitants, though in other respects the city is healthy. The quantity of sore-eyed, cross-eyed, one-eyed, and totally blind persons one meets every where, is surprising. There are some beggars, mostly old or deformed, but by no means so abundant or impertinent as in the Italian cities. A number of shabby policemen, in blue frock-coats and white pantaloons, parade the principal thoroughfares, but I never saw their services called into requisition. The soldiers, who wear a European dress of white cotton, are by far the most awkward and unpicturesque class. Even the Fellah, whose single brown garment hangs loose from his shoulders to his knees, has an air of dignity compared with these Frankish caricatures. The genuine Egyptian costume, which bears considerable resemblance to the Greek, and especially the Hydriote, is simple and graceful. The colors are dark—principally brown, blue, green and violet—relieved by a

heavy silk sash of some gay pattern, and by the red slippers and tarboosh. But, as in Turkey, the Pashas and Beys, and many of the minor officers of the civil departments have adopted the Frank dress, retaining only the tarboosh,—a change which is by no means becoming to them. I went into an Egyptian barber-shop one day, to have my hair shorn, and enjoyed the preparatory pipe and coffee in company with two individuals, whom I supposed to be French or Italians of the vulgar order, until the barber combed out the long locks on the top of their head, by which Mussulmen expect to be lifted up into Paradise. When they had gone, the man informed me that one was Khalim Pasha, one of the grandsons of Mohammed Ali, and the other a Bey, of considerable notoriety. The Egyptians certainly do not gain any thing by adopting a costume which, in this climate, is neither so convenient nor so agreeable as their own.

Besides the animated life of the bazaars, which I had an opportunity of seeing, in making my outfit for the winter's journey, I rarely went out without witnessing some incident or ceremony illustrative of Egyptian character and customs. One morning I encountered a stately procession, with music and banners, accompanying a venerable personage, with a green turban on his head and a long white beard flowing over his breast. This, as Kish assured me, was the Shereef of Mecca. He was attended by officers in the richest Turkish and Egyptian costumes, mounted on splendid Arabian steeds, who were almost hidden under their broad housings of green and crimson velvet, embroidered with gold. The people on all sides, as he passed, laid their hands on their breasts and bowed low, which he answered by slowly lifting his hand. It was a simple motion, but nothing could have been more calm and majestic.



On another occasion, I met a bridal procession in the streets of Boulak. Three musicians, playing on piercing flutes, headed the march, followed by the parents of the bride, who, surrounded by her maids, walked under a crimson canopy. She was shrouded from head to foot in a red robe, over which a gilded diadem was fastened around her head. A large crowd of friends and relatives closed the procession, close behind which followed another, of very different character. The chief actors were four boys, of five or six years old, on their way to be circumcised. Each was mounted on a handsome horse, and wore the gala garments of a full-grown man, in which their little bodies were entirely lost. The proud parents marched by their sides, supporting them, and occasionally holding to their lips bottles of milk and sherbet. One was a jet black Nubian, who seemed particularly delighted with his situation, and grinned on all sides as he passed along. This procession was headed by a buffoon, who carried a laugh with him which opened a ready passage through the crowd. A man followed balancing on his chin a long pole crowned with a bunch of flowers. He came to me for backsheesh. His success brought me two swordsmen out of the procession, who cut at each other with scimitars and caught the blows on their shields. The coolness, swiftness and skill with which they parried the strokes was really admirable, and the concluding flourish was a masterpiece. One of them, striking with the full sweep of his arm, aimed directly at the face of the other, as if to divide his head into two parts; but, without making a pause, the glittering weapon turned, and sliced the air within half an inch of his eyes. The man neither winked nor moved a muscle of his face, but after the scimitar had passed, dashed it up with his shield, which he then reversed,

and dropping on one knee, held to me for backsheesh. After these came a camel, with a tuft of ostrich feathers on his head and a boy on his back, who pounded vigorously on two wooden drums with one hand, while he stretched the other down to me for backsheesh. Luckily the little candidates for circumcision were too busily engaged with their milk bottles and sugar-plums, to join in the universal cry.

I had little time to devote to the sights of Cairo, and was obliged to omit the excursions to the Petrified Forest, to Helio-polis and Old Cairo, until my return. Besides the city itself, which was always full of interest, I saw little else except the Citadel and the Island of Rhoda. We took the early morning for our ride to the former place, and were fortunate enough to find our view of the Nile-plain unobscured by the mists customary at this season. The morning light is most favorable to the landscape, which lies wholly to the westward. The shadows of the Citadel and the crests of the Mokattam Hills then lie broad and cool over the city, but do not touch its minarets, which glitter in the air like shafts of white and rosy flame. The populace is up and stirring, and you can hear the cries of the donkeymen and water-carriers from under the sycamores and acacias that shade the road to Boulak. Over the rich palm-gardens, the blue streak of the river and the plain beyond, you see the phantoms of two pyramids in the haze which still curtains the Libyan Desert. Northward, beyond the parks and palaces of Shoobra, the Nile stretches his two great arms toward the sea, dotted, far into the distance, with sails that flash in the sun. From no other point, and at no other time, is Cairo so grand and beautiful.

Within the walls of the Citadel is the *Bir Youssef*—Jo-

seph's Well—as it is called by the Arabs, not from the virtuous Hebrew, but from Sultan Saladin, who dug it out and put it in operation. The well itself dates from the old Egyptian time, but was filled with sand and entirely lost for many centuries. It consists of an upper and lower shaft, cut through the solid rock, to the depth of two hundred and sixty feet. A winding gallery, lighted from the shaft, extends to the bottom of the first division, where, in a chamber cut in the rock, a mule turns the large wheel which brings up a continual string of buckets from the fountain below. The water is poured into a spacious basin, and carried thence to the top by another string of buckets set in motion at the surface. Attended by two Arabs with torches, we made the descent of the first shaft and took a drink of the fresh, cool fluid. This well, and the spot where the Mameluke Emin Bey jumped his horse over the wall and escaped the massacre of his comrades, are the only interesting historical points about the Citadel; and the new mosque of Mohammed Ali, which overlooks the city from the most projecting platform of the fortifications, is the only part which has any claim to architectural beauty. Although it has been in process of erection for many years, this mosque is not nearly completed internally. The exterior is finished, and its large, white, depressed dome, flanked by minarets so tall and reed-like that they seem ready to bend with every breeze, is the first signal of Cairo to travellers coming up or down the Nile. The interior walls are lined throughout with oriental alabaster, stained with the orange flush of Egyptian sunsets, and the three domes blaze with elaborate arabesques of green, blue, crimson and gold. In a temporary chamber, fitted up in one corner, rests the coffin of Mohammed Ali, cov-

ered with a heavy velvet pall, and under the marble arches before it, a company of priests, squatted on the green carpet covering the floor, bow their heads continually and recite prayers or fragments of the Koran.

Before descending into the city, I rode a little way into the Desert to the tombs of the Caliphs, on the road to Suez. They consist mostly of stone canopies raised on pillars, with mosques or oratories attached to them, exhibiting considerable variety in their design, but are more curious than impressive. The track in the sand made by the pilgrims to Mecca and the overland passengers to Suez, had far more real interest in my eyes. The pilgrims are fewer, and the passengers more numerous, with each successive year. English-built omnibuses, whirled along by galloping post-horses, scatter the sand, and in the midst of the herbless Desert, the travellers regale themselves with beefsteak and ale, and growl if the accustomed Cheshire is found wanting. At this rate, how long will it be before there is a telegraph-station in Mecca, and the operator explodes with his wire a cannon on the Citadel of Cairo, to announce that the prayers on Mount Arafat have commenced?

The Island of Rhoda, which I visited on a soft, golden afternoon, is but a reminiscence of what it was a few years ago. Since Ibrahim Pasha's death it has been wholly neglected, and though we found a few gardeners at work, digging up the sodden flower-beds and clipping the rank myrtle hedges, they only served to make the neglect more palpable. During the recent inundation, the Nile had risen to within a few inches of covering the whole island, and the soil was still soft and clammy. Nearly all the growths of the tropics are nurtured here; the coffee, the Indian fig, the mango, and other

trees alternate with the palm, orange, acacia, and the yellow mimosa, whose blossoms make the isle fragrant. I gathered a bunch of roses and jasmine-flowers from the unpruned vines. In the centre of the garden is an artificial grotto lined with shells, many of which have been broken off and carried away by ridiculous tourists. There is no limit to human silliness, as I have wisely concluded, after seeing Pompey's Pillar disfigured by "Isaac Jones" (or some equally classic name), in capitals of black paint, a yard long, and finding "Jenny Lind" equally prominent on the topmost stone of the great Pyramid. (Of course, the enthusiastic artist chiselled his own name beside hers.) A mallet and chisel are often to be found in the outfits of English and American travellers, and to judge from the frequency of certain names, and the pains bestowed upon their inscription, the owners must have spent the most of their time in Upper Egypt, in leaving records of their vulgar vanity.

## CHAPTER IV.

## PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY INTO CENTRAL AFRICA.

Necessity of Leaving Immediately—Engaging a Boat—The Dragomen—Achmet el Saidi—Funds—Information—Procuring an Outfit—Preparing for the Desert—The Lucky Day—Exertions to Leave—Off!

I DEVOTED but little time to seeing Cairo, for the travelling season had arrived, and a speedy departure from Cairo was absolutely necessary. The trip to Khartoum occupies at least two months and it is not safe to remain there later than the first of March, on account of the heat and the rainy season, which is very unhealthy for strangers. Dr. Knoblecher, the Catholic Apostolic Vicar for Central Africa, had left about a month previous, on his expedition to the sources of the White Nile. I therefore went zealously to work, and in five days my preparations were nearly completed. I prevailed upon the European of our triad, who had intended proceeding no further than Cairo, to join me for the voyage to Assouan, on the Nubian frontier, and our first care was to engage a good *dahabiyeh*, or Nile-boat. This arrangement gave me great joy, for nowhere is a congenial comrade so desirable as on the Nile. My friend appreciated the river, and without the prospect of seeing Thebes, Ombos and Philæ, would have cheerfully borne all the inconveniences and delays of the journey, for the Nile's

sake alone. Commend me to such a man, for of the hundreds of tourists who visit the East, there are few such! On my arrival, I had found that the rumors I had heard on the road respecting the number of travellers and the rise in the price of boats, were partially true. Not more than a dozen boats had left for Upper Egypt, but the price had been raised in anticipation. The ship carpenters and painters were busily employed all along the shore at Boulak, in renovating the old barks or building new ones, and the Beys and Pashas who owned the craft were anticipating a good harvest. Some travellers paid forty-five pounds a month for their vessels, but I found little difficulty in getting a large and convenient boat, for two persons, at twenty pounds a month. This price, it should be understood, includes the services of ten men, who find their own provisions, and only receive a gratuity in case of good behavior. The American Consul, Mr. Kahil, had kindly obtained for me the promise of a bark from Ismail Pasha, before our arrival—a superb vessel, furnished with beds, tables, chairs and divans, in a very handsome style—which was offered at thirty pounds a month, but it was much larger than we needed. In the course of my inspection of the fleet of barks at Boulak, I found several which might be had at fifteen, and seventeen pounds a month, but they were old, inconvenient, and full of vermin. Our boat, which I named the Cleopatra, had been newly cleansed and painted, and contained, besides a spacious cabin, with beds and divans, a sort of portico on the outside, with cushioned seats, where we proposed to sit during the balmy twilight, and smoke our shebooks.

Without a tolerable knowledge of Arabic, a dragoman is indispensable. The few phrases I had picked up, on the way

from Alexandria, availed me little, and would have been useless in Nubia, where either the Berberi language, or a different Arabic dialect is spoken; and I therefore engaged a dragoman for the journey. This class of persons always swarm in Cairo, and I had not been there a day before I was visited by half a dozen, who were anxious to make the trip to Khartoum. How they knew I was going there, I cannot imagine; but I found that they knew the plans of every traveller in Cairo as well. I endeavored to find one who had already made the journey, but of all who presented themselves, only two had been farther than the second Cataract. One of these was a Nubian, who had made a trip with the Sennaar merchants, as far as Shendy, in Ethiopia; but he had a sinister, treacherous face, and I refused him at once. The other was an old man, named Suleyman Ali, who had been for three years a servant of Champollion, whose certificate of his faithfulness and honesty he produced.

He had been three years in Sennaar, and in addition to Italian, (the only Frank tongue he knew), spoke several Ethiopian dialects. He was a fine, venerable figure, with an honest face, and I had almost decided to take him, when I learned that he was in feeble health and would scarcely be able to endure the hardships of the journey. I finally made choice of a dark Egyptian, born in the valley of Thebes. He was called Achmet el Saïdi, or Achmet of Upper Egypt, and when a boy had been for several years a servant in the house of the English Consul at Alexandria. He spoke English fluently, as well as a little Italian and Turkish. I was first attracted to him by his bold, manly face, and finding that his recommendations were excellent, and that he had sufficient spirit, courage and address



to serve us both in case of peril, I engaged him, notwithstanding he had never travelled beyond Wadi Halfa (the Second Cataract). I judged, however, that I was quite as familiar with the geography of Central Africa as any dragoman I could procure, and that, in any case, I should find it best to form my own plans and choose my own paths. How far I was justified in my choice, will appear in the course of the narrative.

The next step was to procure a double outfit—for the Nile and the Desert—and herein Achmet, who had twice made the journey to Mount Sinai and Petra, rendered me good service. I had some general knowledge of what was necessary, but without the advantage of his practical experience, should have been very imperfectly prepared. As it was, many things were forgotten in the haste of departure, the need of which I felt when it was too late to procure them. I had been prudent enough, when in Vienna, to provide myself with Berghaus's great map of Arabia and the Valley of the Nile, which, with a stray volume of Russegger, were my only guides. In Khartoum, afterwards, I stumbled upon a copy of Hoskins's Ethiopia. The greater part of my funds I changed into Egyptian silver *medjids*, *colonnati*, or Spanish pillar-dollars, and the Austrian dollar of Maria Theresa, all of which are current as far as Senaar and Abyssinia. I also procured five hundred piastres in copper pieces of five paràs (about half a cent) each, which were contained in a large palm-basket, and made nearly an ass's load. In addition to these supplies, I obtained from an Armenian merchant a letter of credit on his brother in Khartoum, for two thousand piastres, on which, he gave me to understand, I should be obliged to pay a discount of twenty per cent. I endeavored, but in vain, to procure some information relative to

the cost of travelling in Nubia and the countries beyond. The Frank merchants knew nothing, except that the expenses were vast, and predicted that the sum I took would prove insufficient and that I should certainly become involved in great difficulties and embarrassments. The native merchants who had made the journey were all jealous of a foreign traveller attempting to penetrate into their peculiar domain, and gave me no satisfactory information, while to the imagination of the Cairenes, Sennaar is the utmost verge of the world, and he who has been there and returned in safety, enjoys the special protection of Allah. Even Achmet, although he showed no signs of fear, and did not hesitate to accompany me, informed his family and friends that we were going no further than Wadi Halfa, for he said they would certainly detain him by force, should they learn the truth.

I did not think it necessary to obtain a firman from Abbas Pasha, which might readily have been procured. The American, English and Austrian Consuls kindly gave me letters to the principal Consular agents and merchants in Khartoum, besides which, Achmet professed to have some acquaintance with Lattif Pasha, who was then Pasha of Soudan. To the Hon. Mr. Murray, the English Consul-General, and Mr. Constantine Kahil, the American Vice-Consul at Cairo, I was especially indebted for favors. The former intrusted me with despatches for Khartoum and Obeid, in Kordofan, and the latter furnished me with letters to the Governors of Thebes, Assouan and Korosko, asking the latter to insure my safety on the journey through the Nubian Desert. Thus prepared, I anticipated no further trouble on the road than from hard-trotting camels, sand, brackish water, and the like privations, which are easily borne

The furnishing of a Nile-boat requires considerable knowledge of housekeeping. The number of small articles required for this floating speck of civilization in a country of barbarians, is amazing to a bachelor. I had no idea that the art of cooking needed such a variety of tools and appliances, and for the first time in my life, conceived some respect for the fame of Ude and Soyer. There are frying-pans and stew-pans; coffee-pots and tea-pots; knives, forks, spoons, towels, cups, ladles and boxes; butter, lard, flour, rice, macaroni, oil, vinegar, mustard and pepper; and no end to the groceries. We must have a table and chairs, quilts and pillows, mats, carpets and napkins, and many other articles which I should never have thought of without the help of Achmet and of M. Pini, who keeps a general dépôt of supplies. His printed lists, in four languages, lighten the traveller's labor very greatly. His experience in regard to the quantity required, is also of much service; otherwise an inexperienced person would not know whether to take twelve or fifty pounds of rice, nor how much sugar belonged to so much coffee. The expense of our outfit, including bread, fowls, mutton, charcoal, and every other requisite, was about two thousand piastres—a little more than one hundred dollars. The calculation was made for one month's provisions for two persons.

For my further journey after leaving the Nile, I was recommended to take a large supply, on account of the scarcity and expense of many articles in Upper Nubia and Sennaar. I therefore purchased sufficient tea, coffee, flour, rice, biscuits, sugar, macaroni and dried fruit to last me two months, beside a complete *canteen*, or supply of articles necessary for life in the desert. I took an extra quantity of gunpowder, tobacco

and coffee, for presents to the Arab shekhs. The entire cost of this outfit was about nine hundred piastres. In addition, I procured a good Turkish tent for two hundred and fifty piastres, to which I added a supply of tent-pins, lantern-poles, water-skins, and leathern water-flasks, all these articles being procured to better advantage in Cairo. I did not propose adopting the Egyptian costume until I had made some progress in the language, and therefore contented myself with purchasing a *bornous* of camel's hair, a sabre, a broad shawl of Tripoli silk, for the waist, and shoes of white leather, which are very cool and comfortable. I also followed the custom of the European residents, in having my hair shorn close to the head, and wearing a white cotton skull-cap. Over this was drawn the red tarboosh, or fez, and as a protection against the sun, I bound a large white shawl around it, which was my first lesson in turban-making.

Achmet, influenced by a superstition which is not peculiar to the East, begged me to hasten our preparations, in order that we might leave Boulak on Monday, which day, he averred, was the luckiest in the week, and would render our journey prosperous from beginning to end. Knowing from experience that half the success of the journey is in the start, and believing that it is better to have superstition with you than against you, I determined to gratify him. He was as zealous as I could wish, and we rested not from morning to night, until at last, from the spirit with which we labored, it seemed almost a matter of life and death, that the boat should leave on Monday. I had a clause inserted in our written contract with the captain, that he should forfeit a day's rent, in case he was not ready at the appointed hour; but, in spite of this precaution,

Achmet, who well knew the indifference of the Arab nature, was constantly on his track. Two or three times a day he galloped to Boulak, to hasten the enlistment of the men, the baking of bread for the voyage, the furbishing of the cabin, and the overhauling of the sails, oars and rigging. My European friends in Cairo smiled at our display of activity, saying that such a thing had never been known, as a boat sailing at the appointed time, and that I was fatiguing myself to no purpose.

Monday (Nov. 17th) came, and the Egyptian cook, Salame, whom we had engaged for the Nile voyage, was despatched to the markets to lay in a supply of fowls, eggs, butter and vegetables. My letters home—the last I expected to send, for months to come—were committed to the Post Office, and after an early dinner, we saw our baggage and stores laden upon carts and started for Boulak, under Achmet's guidance. We took leave of the few friends we had made in Cairo, and followed. The *Cleopatra* was still lying in the midst of a crowd of *dahabiyehs*, but the American flag, hoisted at the peak of her little mizzenmast, was our "cornet," proclaiming departure. We found Achmet unjacketed and unturbaned, stowing away the stores, with one eye on the raïs, and another (as it seemed to me) on each of the tardy sailors. There was still charcoal to be bought, and *bois gras* for kindling fires, and clubs for the men, to prevent invasions from the shore, with many more of those wants which are never remembered until the last moment. The afternoon wore away; the shadows of the feathery date-trees on the island of Rhoda stretched long and cool across the Nile; but before the sun had touched the tops of the Pyramids, we had squeezed

out from the shipping of Boulak, and were slowly working up the Nile before a light wind, while our boatmen thumped the *tarabooka*, and sang their wild Arab songs of departure. The raïs came up to know whether he had not fulfilled his contract, and Achmet with a cheerful face, turned to me and said : " Praised be Allah, master ! we shall have a lucky journey."



Achmet.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PYRAMIDS AND MEMPHIS.

**Howling Dervishes—A Chicken Factory—Ride to the Pyramids—Quarrel with the Arabs—The Ascent—View from the Summit—Backsheesh—Effect of Pyramid climbing—The Sphinx—Playing the Cadi—We obtain Justice—Visit to Sakkara and the Mummy Pits—The Exhumation of Memphis—Interview with M. Mariette—Account of his Discoveries—Statue of Remeses II.—Return to the Nile.**

"And Morning opes in haste her lids,  
To gaze upon the Pyramids."—EMERSON.

WE went no further than the village of Gizeh, three or four miles above Cairo, on the first evening, having engaged our donkeys and their drivers to meet us there and convey us to the Pyramids on the following morning. About dusk, the raïs moored our boat to the bank, beside a College of dervishes, whose unearthly chants, choruses and clapping of hands, were prolonged far into the night. Their wild cries, and deep, mo-

notonous bass howlings so filled our ears that we could not choose but listen, and, in spite of our fatigue, sleep was impossible. After performing for several hours, they gradually ceased, through sheer exhaustion, though there was one tough old dervish, who continued to gasp out, "*Allah! Allah!*" with such a spasmodic energy, that I suspected it was produced by the involuntary action of his larynx, and that he could not have stopped, even had he been so minded.

When we threw open the latticed blinds of our cabin, before sunrise, the next morning, the extraordinary purity of the air gave rise to an amusing optical delusion on the part of my friend. "See that wall!" said he, pointing to a space between two white houses; "what a brilliant color it is painted, and how those palms and these white houses are relieved against it!" He was obliged to look twice before he perceived that what he had taken for a wall close at hand, was really the sky, and rested upon a far-off horizon. Our donkeys were in readiness on the bank, and I bestrode the same faithful little gray who had for three days carried me through the bazaars of Cairo. We left orders for the raïs to go on to Bedracheyn, a village near the supposed site of Memphis, and taking Achmet with us, rode off gayly among the mud hovels and under the date-trees of Gizeh, on our way to the Pyramids. Near the extremity of the village, we entered one of the large chicken-hatching establishments for which the place is famed, but found it empty. We disturbed a numerous family of Fellahs, couched together on the clay floor, crept on our hands and knees through two small holes and inspected sundry ovens covered with a layer of chaff, and redolent of a mild, moist heat and a feathery smell. The owner informed us that for



the first four or five days the eggs were exposed to smoke as well as heat, and that when the birds began to pick the shell, which generally took place in fifteen days, they were placed in another oven and carefully accouched.

The rising sun shone redly on the Pyramids, as we rode out on the broad harvest land of the Nile. The black, unctuous loam was still too moist from the inundation to be ploughed, except in spots, here and there, but even where the water had scarce evaporated, millions of germs were pushing their slender blades up to the sunshine. In that prolific soil, the growth of grain is visible from day to day. The Fellahs were at work on all sides, preparing for planting, and the ungainly buffaloes drew their long ploughs slowly through the soil. Where freshly turned, the earth had a rich, soft lustre, like dark-brown velvet, beside which the fields of young wheat, beans and lentils, glittered with the most brilliant green. The larks sang in the air and flocks of white pigeons clustered like blossoms on the tops of the sycamores. There, in November, it was the freshest and most animating picture of Spring. The direct road to the Pyramids was impassable, on account of the water, and we rode along the top of a dyke, intersected by canals, to the edge of the Libyan Desert—a distance of nearly ten miles. The ruptures in the dyke obliged us occasionally to dismount, and at the last canal, which cuts off the advancing sands from the bounteous plain on the other side, our donkeys were made to swim, while we were carried across on the shoulders of two naked Arabs. They had run out in advance to meet us, hailing us with many English and French phrases, while half a dozen boys, with earthen bottles which they had just filled from the slimy canal, crowded after them,

insisting, in very good English, that we should drink at once and take them with us to the Pyramids.

Our donkeys' hoofs now sank deep in the Libyan sands and we looked up to the great stone-piles of Cheops, Cephrenes and Mycerinus, not more than half a mile distant. Our sunrise view of the Pyramids on leaving Gizeh, was sufficient, had I gone no further, and I approached them, without the violent emotion which sentimental travellers experience, but with a quiet feeling of the most perfect satisfaction. The form of the pyramid is so simple and complete, that nothing is left to the imagination. Those vast, yellowish-gray masses, whose feet are wrapped in the silent sand, and whose tops lean against the serene blue heaven, enter the mind and remain in the memory with no shock of surprise, no stir of unexpected admiration. The impression they give and leave, is calm, grand and enduring as themselves.

The sun glared hot on the sand as we toiled up the ascent to the base of Cheops, whose sharp corners were now broken into zigzags by the layers of stone. As we dismounted in his shadow, at the foot of the path which leads up to the entrance, on the northern side, a dozen Arabs beset us. They belonged to the regular herd who have the Pyramids in charge, and are so renowned for their impudence that it is customary to employ the janissary of some Consulate in Cairo, as a protection. Before leaving Gizeh I gave Achmet my sabre, which I thought would be a sufficient show to secure us from their importunities. However, when we had mounted to the entrance and were preparing to climb to the summit, they demanded a dollar from each for their company on the way. This was just four times the usual fee, and we flatly refused the demand. My

friend had in the mean time become so giddy from the few steps he had mounted, that he decided to return, and I ordered Achmet, who knew the way, to go on with me and leave the Arabs to their howlings. Their leader instantly sprang before him, and attempted to force him back. This was too much for Achmet, who thrust the man aside, whereupon he was instantly beset by three or four, and received several hard blows. The struggle took place just on the verge of the stones, and he was prudent enough to drag his assailants into the open space before the entrance of the Pyramid. My friend sprang towards the group with his cane, and I called to the donkey-driver to bring up my sabre, but by this time Achmet had released himself, with the loss of his turban.

The Arabs, who had threatened to treat us in the same manner, then reduced their demand to the regular fee of five piastres for each. I took three of them and commenced the ascent, leaving Achmet and my friend below. Two boys followed us, with bottles of water. At first, the way seemed hazardous, for the stones were covered with sand and fragments which had fallen from above, but after we had mounted twenty courses, the hard, smooth blocks of granite formed broader and more secure steps. Two Arabs went before, one holding each of my hands, while the third shoved me up from the rear. The assistance thus rendered was not slight, for few of the stones are less than four feet in height. The water-boys scampered up beside us with the agility of cats. We stopped a moment to take breath, at a sort of resting-place half-way up—an opening in the Pyramid, communicating with the uppermost of the interior chambers. I had no sooner sat down on the nearest stone, than the Arabs stretched themselves

at my feet and entertained me with most absurd mixture of flattery and menace. One, patting the calves of my legs, cried out; "Oh, what fine, strong legs! how fast they came up: nobody ever went up the Pyramid so fast!" while the others added: "Here you must give us backsheesh: every body gives us a dollar here." My only answer was, to get up and begin climbing, and they did not cease pulling and pushing till they left me breathless on the summit. The whole ascent did not occupy more than ten minutes.

The view from Cheops has been often described. I cannot say that it increased my impression of the majesty and grandeur of the Pyramid, for that was already complete. My eyes wandered off from the courses of granite, broadening away below my feet, to contemplate the glorious green of the Nile-plain, barred with palm-trees and divided by the gleaming flood of the ancient river; the minarets of Cairo; the purple walls of the far Arabian mountains; the Pyramid groups of Sakkara and Dashoor, overlooking disinterred Memphis in the South; and the arid yellow waves of the Libyan Desert, which rolled unbroken to the western sky. The clear, open heaven above, which seemed to radiate light from its entire concave, clasped in its embrace and harmonized the different features of this wonderful landscape. There was too much warmth and brilliance for desolation. Every thing was alive and real; the Pyramids were not ruins, and the dead Pharaohs, the worshippers of Athor and Apis, did not once enter my mind.

My wild attendants did not long allow me to enjoy the view quietly. To escape from their importunities for backsheesh, I gave them two piastres in copper coin, which instantly turned their flatteries into the most bitter complaints. It was

insulting to give so little, and they preferred having none; if I would not give a dollar, I might take the money back. I took it without more ado, and put it into my pocket. This rather surprised them, and first one, and then another came to me and begged to have it again, on his own private account. I threw the coins high into the air, and as they clattered down on the stones, there ensued such a scramble as would have sent any but Arabs over the edge of the Pyramid. We then commenced the descent, two seizing my hands as before, and dragging me headlong after them. We went straight down the side, sliding and leaping from stone to stone without stopping to take breath, and reached the base in five or six minutes. I was so excited from the previous aggression of the Arabs, that I neither felt fatigue nor giddiness on the way up and down, and was not aware how violent had been my exertions. But when I touched the level sand, all my strength vanished in an instant. A black mist came over my eyes, and I sank down helpless and nearly insensible. I was scarcely able to speak, and it was an hour before I could sit upright on my donkey. I felt the Pyramid in all my bones, and for two or three days afterwards moved my joints with as much difficulty as a rheumatic patient.

The Arabs, who at first had threatened to kill Achmet, now came forward and kissed his hands, humbly entreating pardon. But his pride had been too severely touched by the blows he had received, and he repulsed them, spitting upon the ground, as the strongest mark of contempt. We considered it due to him, to ourselves, and to other travellers after us, to represent the matter to the Shekh of the Pyramids, who lives in a village called Kinnayseh, a mile distant, and ordered

Achmet to conduct us thither. We first rode along the base of the Pyramid of Cephrenes, and down the sand drifts to the majestic head of the Sphinx. I shall not attempt to describe this enormous relic of Egyptian art. There is nothing like it in the world. Those travellers who pronounce its features to be negro in their character, are certainly very hasty in their conclusions. That it is an Egyptian head is plainly evident, notwithstanding its mutilation. The type, however, is rather fuller and broader than is usual in Egyptian statues.

On reaching the village we found that the shekh was absent in Cairo, but were received by his son, who, after spelling out a few words of my Arabic passport and hearing Achmet's relation of the affair, courteously invited us to his house. We rode between the mud huts to a small court-yard, where we dismounted. A carpet was spread on the ground, under a canopy of palm-leaves, and the place of honor was given to us, the young shekh seating himself on the edge, while our donkey-drivers, water-boys and a number of villagers, stood respectfully around. A messenger was instantly despatched to the Pyramids, and in the mean time we lighted the pipe of peace. The shekh promised to judge the guilty parties and punish them in our presence. Coffee was ordered, but as the unlucky youth returned and indiscreetly cried out, "*Ma feesh!*" (there is none!) the shekh took him by the neck, and run him out of the court-yard, threatening him with all manner of penalties unless he brought it.

We found ourselves considered in the light of judges, and I thought involuntarily of the children playing Cadi, in the Arabian tale. But to play our Cadi with the necessary gravity of countenance was a difficult matter. It was rather em-

barrassing to sit cross-legged so long, and to look so severe. My face was of the color of a boiled lobster, from the sun, and in order to protect my eyes, I had taken off my cravat and bound it around the red tarboosh. My friend had swathed his felt hat in like manner, and when the shekh looked at us from time to time, while Achmet spoke of our friendship with all the Consuls in Cairo, it was almost too much to enjoy quietly. However, the shekh, who wore a red cap and a single cotton garment, treated us with much respect. His serene, impartial demeanor, as he heard the testimony of the various witnesses who were called up, was most admirable. After half an hour's delay, the messenger returned, and the guilty parties were brought into court, looking somewhat alarmed and very submissive. We identified the two ringleaders, and after considering the matter thoroughly, the shekh ordered that they should be instantly bastinadoed. We decided between ourselves to let the punishment commence, lest the matter should not be considered sufficiently serious, and then to show our mercy by pardoning the culprits.

One of the men was then thrown on the ground and held by the head and feet, while the shekh took a stout rod and began administering the blows. The victim had prepared himself by giving his bournous a double turn over his back, and as the end of the rod struck the ground each time, there was much sound with the veriest farce of punishment. After half a dozen strokes, he cried out, "*ya salaam!*" whereupon the crowd laughed heartily, and my friend ordered the shekh to stop. The latter cast the rod at our feet, and asked us to continue the infliction ourselves, until we were satisfied. We told him and the company in general, through Achmet, that

we were convinced of his readiness to punish imposition ; that we wished to show the Arabs that they must in future treat travellers with respect ; that we should send word of the affair to Cairo, and they might rest assured that a second assault would be more severely dealt with. Since this had been demonstrated, we were willing that the punishment should now cease, and in conclusion returned our thanks to the shekh, for his readiness to do us justice. This decision was received with great favor ; the two culprits came forward and kissed our hands and those of Achmet, and the villagers pronounced a unanimous sentence of "*taïb !*" (good !) The indiscreet youth again appeared, and this time with coffee, of which we partook with much relish, for this playing the Cadi was rather fatiguing. The shekh raised our hands to his forehead, and accompanied us to the end of the village, where we gave the coffee-bearer a backsheesh, dismissed our water-boys, and turned our donkeys' heads toward Abousir.

Achmet's dark skin was pale from his wounded pride, and I was faint from pyramid-climbing, but a cold fowl, eaten as we sat in the sun, on the border of the glowing Desert, comforted us. The dominion of the sand has here as distinct a bound as that of the sea ; there is not thirty yards from the black, pregnant loam, to the fiery plain, where no spear of grass grows. Our path lay sometimes on one side of this border, sometimes on the other, for more than an hour and a half, till we reached the ruined pyramids of Abousir, where it turned southward into the Desert. After seeing Cheops and Cephrenes, these pyramids are only interesting on account of their dilapidated state and the peculiarity of their forms, some of their sides taking a more obtuse angle at half their height



They are buried deep in the sand, which has so drifted toward the plain, that from the broad hollow lying between them and the group of Sakkara, more than a mile distant, every sign of vegetation is shut out. Vast, sloping causeways of masonry lead up to two of them, and a large mound, occupying the space between, suggests the idea that a temple formerly stood there. The whole of the desert promontory, which seemed to have been gradually blown out on the plain, from the hills in the rear, exhibits traces here and there of ruins beneath the surface. My friend and I, as we walked over the hot sand, before our panting donkeys, came instinctively to the same conclusion—that a large city must have once occupied the space between, and to the southward of, the two groups of pyramids. It is not often that amateur antiquarians find such sudden and triumphant confirmation of their conjectures, as we did.

On the way, Achmet had told us of a Frenchman who had been all summer digging in the sand, near Sakkara. After we had crawled into the subterranean dépôt of mummied ibises, and nearly choked ourselves with dust in trying to find a pot not broken open; and after one of our donkeymen went into a human mummy pit and brought out the feet and legs of some withered old Egyptian, we saw before us the residence of this Frenchman; a mud hut on a high sand-bank. It was an unfortunate building, for nearly all the front wall had tumbled down, revealing the contents of his kitchen. One or two Arabs loitered about, but a large number were employed at the end of a long trench which extended to the hills.

Before reaching the house a number of deep pits barred our path, and the loose sand, stirred by our feet, slid back into

the bottom, as if eager to hide the wonders they disclosed. Pavements, fresh as when first laid; basement-walls of white marble, steps, doorways, pedestals and fragments of pillars glittered in the sun, which, after the lapse of more than two thousand years, beheld them again. I slid down the side of the pit and walked in the streets of Memphis. The pavement of bitumen, which once covered the stone blocks, apparently to protect them and deaden the noise of horses and chariots, was entire in many places. Here a marble sphinx sat at the base of a temple, and stared abstractedly before her; there a sculptured cornice, with heavy mouldings, leaned against the walls of the chamber into which it had fallen, and over all were scattered fragments of glazed and painted tiles and sculptured alabaster. The principal street was narrow, and was apparently occupied by private dwellings, but at its extremity were the basement-walls of a spacious edifice. All the pits opened on pavements and walls, so fresh and cleanly cut, that they seemed rather the foundations of a new city, laid yesterday, than the remains of one of the oldest capitals of the world.

We approached the workmen, where we met the discoverer of Memphis, Mr. Auguste Mariette. On finding we were not Englishmen (of whose visits he appeared to be rather shy), he became very courteous and communicative. He apologized for the little he had to show us, since on account of the Vandalism of the Arabs, he was obliged to cover up all his discoveries, after making his drawings and measurements. The Egyptian authorities are worse than apathetic, for they would not hesitate to burn the sphinxes for lime, and build barracks for filthy soldiers with the marble blocks. Besides this, the French influence at Cairo was then entirely overshadowed by

that of England, and although M. Mariette was supported in his labors by the French Academy, and a subscription headed by Louis Napoleon's name, he was forced to be content with the simple permission to dig out these remarkable ruins and describe them. He could neither protect them nor remove the portable sculptures and inscriptions, and therefore preferred giving them again into the safe keeping of the sand. Here they will be secure from injury, until some more fortunate period, when, possibly, the lost Memphis may be entirely given to the world, as fresh as Pompeii, and far more grand and imposing.

I asked M. Mariette what first induced him to dig for Memphis in that spot, since antiquarians had fixed upon the mounds near Mitrahenny (a village in the plain below, and about four miles distant), as the former site of the city. He said that the tenor of an inscription which he found on one of the blocks quarried out of these mounds, induced him to believe that the principal part of the city lay to the westward, and therefore he commenced excavating in the nearest sand-hill in that direction. After sinking pits in various places he struck on an avenue of sphinxes, the clue to all his after discoveries. Following this, he came upon the remains of a temple (probably the *Serapeum*, or Temple of Serapis, mentioned by Strabo), and afterward upon streets, colonnades, public and private edifices, and all other signs of a great city. The number of sphinxes alone, buried under these high sand-drifts, amounted to two thousand, and he had frequently uncovered twenty or thirty in a day. He estimated the entire number of statues, inscriptions and reliefs, at between four and five thousand. The most remarkable discovery was that of eight colossal

statues, which were evidently the product of Grecian art. During thirteen months of assiduous labor, with but one assistant, he had made drawings of all these objects and forwarded them to Paris. In order to be near at hand, he had built an Arab house of unburnt bricks, the walls of which had just tumbled down for the third time. His workmen were then engaged in clearing away the sand from the dwelling of some old Memphian, and he intended spreading his roof over the massive walls, and making his residence in the exhumed city.

The man's appearance showed what he had undergone, and gave me an idea of the extraordinary zeal and patience required to make a successful antiquarian. His face was as brown as an Arab's, his eyes severely inflamed, and his hands as rough as a bricklayer's. His manner with the native workmen was admirable, and they labored with a hearty good-will which almost supplied the want of the needful implements. All they had were straw baskets, which they filled with a sort of rude shovel, and then handed up to be carried off on the heads of others. One of the principal workmen was deaf and dumb, but the funniest Arab I ever saw. He was constantly playing off his jokes on those who were too slow or too negligent. An unlucky girl, stooping down at the wrong time to lift a basket of sand, received the contents of another on her head, and her indignant outcry was hailed by the rest with screams of laughter. I saw the same man pick out of the sand a glazed tile containing hieroglyphic characters. The gravity with which he held it before him, feigning to peruse it, occasionally nodding his head, as if to say, "Well done for old Pharaoh!" could not have been excelled by Burton himself.

Strabo states that Memphis had a circumference of seven

teen miles, and therefore both M. Mariette and the antiquarians are right. The mounds of Mitrahenny probably mark the eastern portion of the city, while its western limit extended beyond the Pyramids of Sakkara, and included in its suburbs those of Abousir and Dashoor. The space explored by M. Mariette is about a mile and a half in length, and somewhat more than half a mile in breadth. He was then continuing his excavations westward, and had almost reached the first ridge of the Libyan Hills, without finding the termination of the ruins. The magnitude of his discovery will be best known when his drawings and descriptions are given to the world. A few months after my visit, his labors were further rewarded by finding thirteen colossal sarcophagi of black marble, and he has recently added to his renown by discovering an entrance to the Sphinx. Yet at that time, the exhumation of the lost Memphis—second only in importance to that of Nineveh—was unknown in Europe, except to a few *savans* in Paris, and the first intimation which some of my friends in Cairo and Alexandria had of it, was my own account of my visit, in the newspapers they received from America. But M. Mariette is a young man, and will yet see his name inscribed beside those of Burekhardt, Belzoni and Layard.

We had still a long ride before us, and I took leave of Memphis and its discoverer, promising to revisit him on my return from Khartoum. As we passed the brick Pyramid of Sakkara, which is built in four terraces of equal height, the dark, grateful green of the palms and harvest-fields of the Nile appeared between two sand-hills—a genuine balm to our heated eyes. We rode through groves of the fragrant mimosa to a broad dike, the windings of which we were obliged to follow

across the plain, as the soil was still wet and adhesive. It was too late to visit the beautiful Pyramids of Dashoor, the first of which is more than three hundred feet in height, and from a distance has almost as grand an effect as those of Gizeh. Our tired donkeys lagged slowly along to the palm-groves of Mitrahenny, where we saw mounds of earth, a few blocks of red granite and a colossal statue of Remeses II. (Sesostris)—which until now were supposed to be the only remains of Memphis. The statue lies on its face in a hole filled with water. The countenance is said to be very beautiful, but I could only see the top of Sesostris's back, which bore a faint resemblance to a crocodile.

Through fields of cotton in pod and beans in blossom, we rode to the Nile, dismissed our donkeys and their attendants, and lay down on some bundles of corn-stalks to wait the arrival of our boat. But there had been a south wind all day, and we had ridden much faster than our men could tow. We sat till long after sunset before the stars and stripes, floating from the mizzen of the *Cleopatra*, turned the corner below Bedrasheyn. When, at last, we sat at our cabin-table, weary and hungry, we were ready to confess that the works of art produced by our cook, Salame, were more marvellous and interesting than Memphis and the Pyramids.

## CHAPTER VI.

## FROM MEMPHIS TO SIOUT.

Leaving the Pyramids—A Calm and a Breeze—A Coptic Visit—Minyeh—The Grottoes of Beni-Hassan—Doum Palms and Crocodiles—Djebel Aboufayda—Entrance into Upper Egypt—Diversions of the Boatmen—Siout—Its Tombs—A Landscape—A Bath.

"It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,  
Like some grave, mighty thought threading a dream."

LEIGH HUNT'S SONNET TO THE NILE.

THE extent of my journey into Africa led me to reverse the usual plan pursued by travellers on the Nile, who sail to Assouan or Wadi-Halfa without pause, and visit the antiquities on their return. I have never been able to discern the philosophy of this plan. The voyage up is always longer, and more tedious (to those heathens who call the Nile tedious), than the return; besides which, two visits, though brief, with an interval between, leave a more complete and enduring image, than a single one. The mind has time to analyze and contrast, and can afterwards confirm or correct the first impressions. How any one can sail from Cairo to Siout, a voyage of two hundred and sixty miles, with but one or two points of interest, without taking the Pyramids with him in memory, I cannot imagine. Were it not for that recollection, I should have pronounced Modern Egypt more interesting than the

Egypt of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies. I omitted seeing none of the important remains on my upward journey, so that I might be left free to choose another route homeward, if possible. It seemed like slighting Fortune to pass Dendera, and Karnak and Ombos, without notice. Opportunity is rare, and a wise man will never let it go by him. I knew not what dangers I might have to encounter, but I knew that it would be a satisfaction to me, even if speared by the Bedouins of the Libyan Desert, to think: "You rascals, you have killed me, but I have seen Thebes!"

The Pyramids of Dashoor followed us all the next day after leaving Memphis. Our sailors tugged us slowly along shore, against a mild south wind, but could not bring us out of the horizon of those red sandstone piles. Our patience was tried, that day and the next, by our slow and toilsome progress, hindered still more by running aground on sand-banks, but we were pledged to patience, and had our reward. On the morning of the fourth day, as we descried before us the minarets of Benisouef, the first large town after leaving Cairo, a timid breeze came rustling over the dourra-fields to the north, and puffed out the Cleopatra's languid sails. The tow-rope was hauled in, our Arabs jumped on board and produced the drum and tambourine, singing lustily as we moved out into the middle of the stream. The wind increased; the flag lifted itself from the mast and streamed toward Thebes, and Benisouef went by, almost before we had counted its minarets. I tried in vain to distinguish the Pyramid of Illahoon, which stands inland, at the base of the Libyan Hills and the entrance of the pass leading to the Lake of Fyoom, the ancient Mœris. Near the Pyramid are the foundations of the famous Labyrinth,



lately excavated by Dr. Lepsius. The Province of Fyoom, surrounding the lake, is, with the exception of the Oases in the Libyan Desert, the only productive land west of the mountains bordering the Nile.

All afternoon, with both sails full and our vessel leaning against the current, we flew before the wind. At dusk, the town of Feshn appeared on our left; at midnight, we passed Abou-Girgeh and the Mounds of Behnesa, the ancient Oxyrinchus; and when the wind left us, at sunrise, we were seventy miles from Benisouef. The Arabian Mountains here approach the river, and at two points terminate in abrupt precipices of yellow calcareous rock. The bare cliffs of Djebel el Tayr (the Mountain of Birds), are crowned with the "Convent of the Pulley," so called from its inaccessible situation, and the fact that visitors are frequently drawn to the summit by a rope and windlass. While passing this convent, a cry came up from the muddy waters of the river: "We are Christians, O How-adj!" and presently two naked Coptic monks wriggled over the gunwale, and sat down, panting and dripping, on the deck. We gave them backsheesh, which they instantly clapped into their mouths, but their souls likewise devoutly yearned for brandy, which they did not get. They were large, lusty fellows, and whatever perfection of spirit they might have attained, their flesh certainly had never been unnecessarily mortified. After a breathing spell, they jumped into the river again, and we soon saw them straddling from point to point, as they crawled up the almost perpendicular cliff. At Djebel el Tayr, the birds of Egypt (according to an Arabic legend) assemble annually and choose one of their number to remain there for a year. My friend complained that the wild geese and ducks

were not represented, and out of revenge fired at a company of huge pelicans, who were seated on a sand-bank.

The drum and tambourine kept lively time to the voices of our sailors, as we approached Minyeh, the second large town on the river, and the capital of a Province. But the song this time had a peculiar significance. After the long-drawn sound, something between a howl and a groan, which terminated it, we were waited upon by a deputation, who formally welcomed us to the city. We responded by a backsheesh of twenty-five piastres, and the drum rang louder than ever. We stayed in Minyeh long enough to buy a leg of mutton, and then sailed for the tombs of Beni-Hassan. The wind left us as we reached a superb palm-grove, which for several miles skirts the foot of Djebel Shekh Timay. The inhabitants are in bad odor, and in addition to our own guard, we were obliged to take two men from the village, who came armed with long sticks and built a fire on the bank, beside our vessel. This is a regulation of the Government, to which travellers usually conform, but I never saw much reason for it. We rose at dawn and wandered for hours through the palms, to the verge of the Desert. When within two or three miles of the mountain of Beni-Hassan, we provided ourselves with candles, water-flasks and weapons, and set off in advance of our boat. The Desert here reached the Nile, terminating in a bluff thirty to forty feet in height, which is composed of layers of pebbles and shelly sand, apparently the deposit of many successive floods. I should have attributed this to the action of the river, cutting a deeper channel from year to year, but I believe it is now acknowledged that the bed of the Nile is gradually rising, and that the yearly inundation covers a much wider space than in the time of the Pha-

raohs. It is difficult to reconcile this fact with the very perceptible encroachments which the sand is making on the Libyan shore; but we may at least be satisfied that the glorious harvest-valley through which the river wanders can never be wholly effaced thereby.

We climbed to the glaring level of the Desert, carrying with us the plumes of a beautiful gray heron which my friend brought down. A solitary Arab horseman was slowly moving along the base of the arid hills, and we descried in the distance a light-footed gazelle, which leisurely kept aloof and mocked our efforts to surround it. At the foot of the mountain we passed two ruined villages, destroyed several years ago by Ibrahim Pasha, on account of the marauding propensities of the inhabitants. It has a cruel sound, when you are told that the people were driven away, and their dwellings razed to the ground, but the reality is a trifling matter. The Arabs take their water-skins and pottery, jump into the Nile, swim across to a safer place, and in three or four days their palaces of mud are drying in the sun. We came upon them the next morning, as thievishly inclined as ever, and this was the only place where I found the people otherwise than friendly.

A steep path, up a slope covered with rounded boulders of hard black rock, leads to the grottoes of Beni-Hassan. They are among the oldest in Egypt, dating from the reign of Osirtasen I, about 1750 years before the Christian Era, and are interesting from their encaustic paintings, representing Egyptian life and customs at that early date. The rock chambers extend for nearly half a mile along the side of the mountain. The most of them are plain and without particular interest, and they have all suffered from the great spoilers of Egypt--

the Persian, the Copt and the Saracen. Four only retain their hieroglyphics and paintings, and are adorned with columns hewn from the solid rock. The first we entered contained four plain, fluted columns, one of which had been shivered in the centre, leaving the architrave and capital suspended from the ceiling. The walls were covered with paintings, greatly faded and defaced, representing the culture and manufacture of flax, the sowing and reaping of grain, and the making of bread, besides a number of spirited hunting and fishing scenes. The occupant of the tomb appears to have been a severe master, for his servants are shown in many places, undergoing the punishment of the bastinado, which is even inflicted upon women. He was also wealthy, for we still see his stewards presenting him with tablets showing the revenues of his property. He was a great man in Joseph's day, but the pit in which he lay is now empty, and the Arabs have long since burned his mummy to boil their rice.

The second tomb is interesting, from a painting representing thirty men, of a foreign nation, who are brought before the deceased occupant. Some antiquarians suppose them to be the brethren of Joseph, but the tomb is that of a person named Nehophth, and the number of men does not correspond with the Bible account. Two of the southern tombs, which are supported by pillars formed of four budding locust-stalks bound together, are covered with paintings representing different trades and professions. The rear walls are entirely devoted to illustrations of gymnastic exercises, and the figures are drawn with remarkable freedom and skill. There are never more than two persons in a group, one being painted red and the other black, in order the better to show the position of

each. In at least five hundred different groupings the same exercise is not repeated, showing a wonderful fertility of invention, either on the part of the artist or the wrestlers. The execution of these figures fully reached my ideas of Egyptian pictorial art, but the colors were much less vivid than some travellers represent. The tombs are not large, though numerous, and what is rather singular, there is not the least trace of a city in the neighborhood, to which they could have belonged.

The next day at noon we passed between the mounds of Antinoë and Hermopolis Magna, lying on opposite banks of the Nile. Antinoë, built by the Emperor Adrian in honor of his favorite, the glorious Antinous, who was here drowned in the river, has entirely disappeared, with the exception of its foundations. Twenty-five years ago, many interesting monuments were still standing, but as they were, unfortunately, of the white calcareous stone of the Arabian Hills, they have been long since burnt for lime. Before reaching Antinoë we had just come on board, after a long walk on the western bank, and the light wind which bore us toward the mountain of Shekh Abaddeh was too pleasant to be slighted; so we saw nothing of Adrian's city except some heaps of dirt. The splendid evening, however, which bathed the naked cliffs of the mountain in rosy flame, was worth more to us than any amount of marble blocks.

The guide book says, "hereabouts appears the doum palm, and crocodiles begin to be more frequently seen." The next morning we found one of the trees, but day after day we vainly sought a crocodile. My friend recalled a song of Geibel's, concerning a German musician who played his violin by the Nile till the crocodiles came out and danced around the Pyramids,

and in his despair would also have purchased a violin, if any could have been found in Siout. I had seen alligators on the Mississippi, and took the disappointment more complacently. The doum palm differs from the columnar date-palm in the form of its leaves, which are fan-like, and in having a branching trunk. The main stem divides a few feet from the root, each of the branches again forming two, and each of these two more, till the tree receives a broad, rounded top. The fruit hangs below in clusters, resembling small cocoa-nuts, and has a sort of gingerbread flavor, which is not disagreeable. When fully dry and hard, it takes a polish like ivory, and is manufactured by the Arabs into beads, pipe bowls and other small articles.

We approached the mountain of Aboufayda with a strong and favorable wind. Here the Nile, for upward of ten miles, washes the foot of lofty precipices, whose many deep fissures and sharp angles give them the appearance of mountains in ruin. The afternoon sun shone full on the yellow rocks, and their jagged pinnacles were cut with wonderful distinctness against the perfect blue of the sky. This mountain is considered the most dangerous point on the Nile for boats, and the sailors always approach it with fear. Owing to its deep side-gorges, the wind sometimes shifts about without a moment's warning, and if the large lateen sail is caught aback, the vessel is instantly overturned. During the passage of this and other similar straits, two sailors sit on deck, holding the sail-rope, ready to let it fly in the wind on the slightest appearance of danger. The shifting of the sail is a delicate business, at such times, but I found it better to trust to our men, awkward as they were, than to confuse by attempting to direct them. At Djebel Shekh Saïd, the sailors have a custom of throwing two

or three loaves of bread on the water, believing that it will be taken up by two large white birds and deposited on the tomb of the Shekh. The wind favored us in passing Aboufayda; the Cleopatra dashed the foam from the rough waves, and in two or three hours the southern corner of the mountain lay behind us, leaning away from the Nile like the shattered pylon of a temple.

Before sunset we passed the city of Manfalout, whose houses year by year topple into the mining flood. The side next the river shows only halves of buildings, the rest of which have been washed away. In a few years the tall and airy minarets will follow, and unless the inhabitants continue to shift their dwellings to the inland side, the city will entirely disappear. From this point, the plain of Siout, the garden of Upper Egypt, opened wide and far before us. The spur of the Libyan hills, at the foot of which the city is built, shot out in advance, not more than ten or twelve miles distant, but the Nile, loth to leave these beautiful fields and groves, winds hither and thither in such a devious, lingering track, that you must sail twenty-five miles to reach El Hamra, the port of Siout. The landscape, broader and more majestic than those of Lower Egypt, is even richer and more blooming. The Desert is kept within its proper bounds; it is no longer visible from the river, and the hills, whose long, level lines frame the view on either side, enhance by their terrible sterility the luxury of vegetation which covers the plain. It is a bounteous land, visited only by healthy airs, and free from the pestilence which sometimes scourges Cairo.

The wind fell at midnight, but came to us again the next morning at sunrise, and brought us to El Hamra before noon.

Our men were in high spirits at having a day of rest before them, the contracts for boats always stipulating for a halt of twenty-four hours at Siout and Esneh, in order that they may procure their supplies of provisions. They buy wheat and dourra, have it ground in one of the rude mills worked by buffaloes, and bake a sufficient quantity of loaves to last two or three weeks. Our men had also the inspiration of backsheesh in their song, and their dolorous love-melodies rang from shore to shore. The correctness with which these people sing is absolutely surprising. Wild and harsh as are their songs, their choruses are in perfect accord, and even when at the same time exerting all their strength at the poles and oars, they never fail in a note. The melodies are simple, but not without expression, and all are pervaded with a mournful monotony which seems to have been caught from the Desert. There is generally an improvisatore in each boat's crew, who supplies an endless number of lines to the regular chorus of "*hay-haylee sah!*" So far as I could understand our poet, there was not the least meaning or connection in his poetry, but he never failed in the rhythm. He sang, for instance: "O Alexandrian!"—then followed the chorus: "Hasten, three of you!"—chorus again: "Hail, Sidi Ibrahim!" and so on, for an hour at a time. On particular occasions, he added pantomime, and the scene on our forward deck resembled a war-dance of the Blackfeet. The favorite pantomime is that of a man running into a hornet's nest. He stamps and cries, improvising all the while, the chorus seeking to drown his voice. He then throws off his mantle, cap, and sometimes his last garment, slapping his body to drive off the hornets, and howling with pain. The song winds up with a prolonged cry,



which only ceases when every lung is emptied. Even when most mirthfully inclined, and roaring in ecstasy over some silly joke, our men always laughed in accord. So sound and hearty were their cachinnatory choruses, that we involuntarily laughed with them.

A crowd of donkeys, ready saddled, awaited us on the bank, and the boys began to fight before our boat was moored. We chose three unpainted animals, so large that our feet were at least three inches from the ground, and set off on a gallop for Siout, which is about a mile and a half from the river. Its fifteen tall, white minarets rose before us, against the background of the mountain, and the handsome front of the palace of Ismail Pasha shone through the dark green of its embosoming acacias. The road follows the course of a dam, built to retain the waters of the inundation, and is shaded with palms, sycamores and mimosas. On either side we looked down upon fields of clover, so green, juicy and June-like that I was tempted to jump from my donkey and take a roll therein. Where the ground was still damp the Arabs were ploughing with camels, and sowing wheat on the moist, fat loam. We crossed a bridge and entered the court of justice, one of the most charmingly clean and shady spots in Egypt. The town, which is built of sun-dried bricks, whose muddy hue is somewhat relieved by the whitewashed mosques and minarets, is astonishingly clean in every part. The people themselves appeared to be orderly, intelligent and amiable.

The tombs of the City of Wolves, the ancient Lycopolis, are in the eastern front of the mountain overhanging the city. We rode to the *Stabl Antar*, the principal one, and then climbed to the summit. The tombs are much larger than

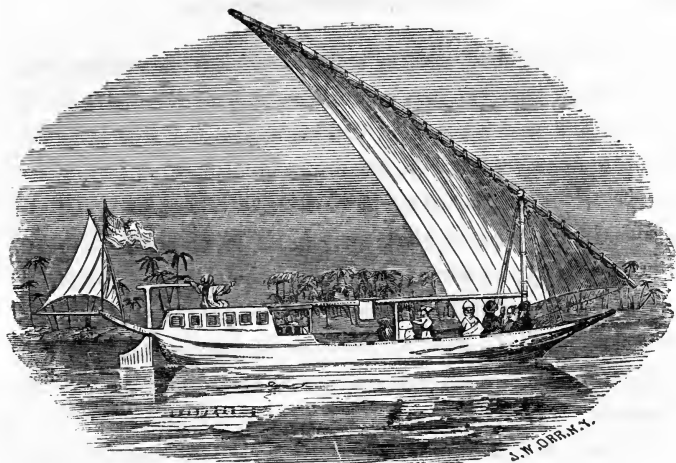
those of Beni-Hassan, but have been almost ruined by the modern Egyptians. The enormous square pillars which filled their halls have been shattered down for lime, and only fragments of the capitals still hang from the ceilings of solid rock. The sculptures and hieroglyphics, which are here not painted but sculptured in intaglio, are also greatly defaced. The second tomb called by the Arabs *Stabl Hamam* (Pigeon Stable), retains its grand doorway, which has on each side the colossal figure of an ancient king. The sand around its mouth is filled with fragments of mummied wolves, and on our way up the mountain we scared one of their descendants from his lair in a solitary tomb. The *Stabl Hamam* is about sixty feet square by forty in height, and in its rough and ruined aspect is more impressive than the more chaste and elegant chambers of Beni-Hassan. The view of the plain of Siout, seen through its entrance, has a truly magical effect. From the gray twilight of the hall in which you stand, the green of the fields, the purple of the distant mountains, and the blue of the sky, dazzle your eye as if tinged with the broken rays of a prism.

From the summit of the mountain, which we reached by scaling a crevice in its white cliffs, we overlooked a more beautiful landscape than that seen from the Pyramid. In the north, beyond the spires of Manfalout and the crags of Abou-fayda, we counted the long palm-groves, receding behind one another to the yellow shore of the Desert; in front, the winding Nile and the Arabian Mountains; southward, a sea of wheat and clover here deepening into dark emerald, there paling into gold, according to the degree of moisture in the soil, and ceasing only because the eye refused to follow; while be-

hind us, over the desert hills, wound the track of the yearly caravan from Dar-Für and Kordofân. Our Arab guide pointed out a sandy plain, behind the cemetery of the Mamelukes, which lay at our feet, as the camping-ground of the caravan, and tried to tell us how many thousand camels were assembled there. As we looked upon the superb plain, teeming with its glory of vegetable life and enlivened by the songs of the Arab ploughmen, a funeral procession came from the city and passed slowly to the burying-ground, accompanied by the dismal howling of a band of women. We went below and rode between the whitewashed domes covering the graves of the Mamelukes. The place was bright, clean and cheerful, in comparison with the other Arab burying-grounds we had seen. The grove which shades its northern wall stretches for more than a mile along the edge of the Desert—a picturesque avenue of palms, sycamores, fragrant acacias, mimosas and acanthus. The air around Siout is pregnant with the rich odor of the yellow mimosa-flowers, and one becomes exhilarated by breathing it.

The city has handsome bazaars and a large bath, built by Mohammed Bey Defterdar, the savage son-in-law of Mohammed Ali. The halls are spacious, supported by granite columns, and paved with marble. Little threads of water, scarcely visible in the dim, steamy atmosphere, shoot upward from the stone tanks, around which a dozen brown figures lie stretched in the lazy beatitude of the bath. I was given over to two Arabs, who scrubbed me to desperation, plunged me twice over head and ears in a tank of scalding water, and then placed me under a cold *douche*. When the whole process, which occupied more than half an hour, was over, a cup of coffee and a pipe

were brought to me as I lay stretched out on the divan, while another attendant commenced a course of dislocation, twisting and cracking all my joints and pressing violently with both hands on my breast. Singularly enough, this removed the languor occasioned by so much hot water, and gave a wonderful elasticity to the frame. I walked out as if shod with the wings of Mercury, and as I rode back to our boat, congratulated my donkey on the airy lightness of his load.



The Cleopatra.

## CHAPTER VII.

### LIFE ON THE NILE.

Independence of Nile Life—The Dahabiyeh—Our Servants—Our Residence—Our Manner of Living—The Climate—The Natives—Costume—Our Sunset Repose—My Friend—A Sensuous Life Defended.

———"The life thou seek'st  
Thou'lt find beside the Eternal Nile."—MOORE'S *ALCIPHRON*.

WE hear much said by tourists who have visited Egypt, concerning the comparative pains and pleasures of life on the Nile, and their decisions are as various as their individual characters. Four out of every five complain of the monotony and tedium of the voyage, and pour forth touching lamentations over the annoyance of rats and cockroaches, the impossibility of procuring beef-steak, or the difficulty of shooting crocodiles. Some of them are wholly impermeable to the influ-

ences of the climate, scenery and ruins of Egypt, and carry to the Nubian frontier the airs of Broadway or Bond-street. I have heard such a one say: "This seeing the Nile is a nice thing *to have gotten over*, but it is a great bore while you are about it." Such is the spirit of those travelling snobs (of all nations), by some of whom sacred Egypt is profaned every winter. They are unworthy to behold the glories of the Nile, and if I had the management of Society, they never should. A palm-tree is to them a good post to shoot a pigeon from; Dendera is a "rum old concern," and a crocodile is better than Karnak.

There are a few, however, who will acknowledge the truth of the picture which follows, and which was written in the cabin of the *Cleopatra*, immediately after our arrival in Upper Egypt. As it is a faithful transcript of my Nilotic life, I have deviated from the regular course of my narrative, in order to give it without change:—

The Nile is the Paradise of Travel. I thought I had already fathomed all the depths of enjoyment which the traveller's restless life could reach—enjoyment more varied and exciting, but far less serene and enduring than that of a quiet home—but here I have reached a fountain too pure and powerful to be exhausted. I never before experienced such a thorough deliverance from all the petty annoyances of travel in other lands, such perfect contentment of spirit, such entire abandonment to the best influences of nature. Every day opens with a *jubilate*, and closes with a thanksgiving. If such a balm and blessing as this life has been to me, thus far, can be felt twice in one's existence, there must be another Nile somewhere in the world.

Other travellers undoubtedly make other experiences and take away other impressions. I can even conceive circumstances which would almost destroy the pleasure of the journey. The same exquisitely sensitive temperament which in our case has not been disturbed by a single untoward incident, might easily be kept in a state of constant derangement by an unsympathetic companion, a cheating dragoman, or a fractious crew. There are also many trifling *desagrégemens*, inseparable from life in Egypt, which some would consider a source of annoyance; but as we find fewer than we were prepared to meet, we are not troubled thereby. Our enjoyment springs from causes so few and simple, that I scarcely know how to make them suffice for the effect, to those who have never visited the Nile. It may be interesting to such to be made acquainted with our manner of living, in detail.

In the first place, we are as independent of all organized Governments as a ship on the open sea. (The Arabs call the Nile *El bahr*, "the sea.") We are on board our own chartered vessel, which must go where we list, the captain and sailors being strictly bound to obey us. We sail under national colors, make our own laws for the time being, are ourselves the only censors over our speech and conduct, and shall have no communication with the authorities on shore, unless our subjects rebel. Of this we have no fear, for we commenced by maintaining strict discipline, and as we make no unreasonable demands, are always cheerfully obeyed. Indeed, the most complete harmony exists between the rulers and the ruled, and though our government is the purest form of despotism, we flatter ourselves that it is better managed than that of the Model Republic.

Our territory, to be sure, is not very extensive. The *Cleopatra* is a *dahabiyeh*, seventy feet long by ten broad. She has two short masts in the bow and stern, the first upholding the *trinkeet*, a lateen sail nearly seventy feet in length. The latter carries the *belikôn*, a small sail, and the American colors. The narrow space around the foremast belongs to the crew, who cook their meals in a small brick furnace, and sit on the gunwale, beating a drum and tambourine and singing for hours in interminable choruses, when the wind blows fair. If there is no wind, half of them are on shore, tugging us slowly along the banks with a long tow-rope, and singing all day long: "*Ayâ hamâm—ayâ hamâm!*" If we strike on a sand-bank, they jump into the river and put their shoulders against the hull, singing: "*hay-haylee sah!*" If the current is slow, they ship the oars and pull us up stream, singing so complicated a refrain that it is impossible to write it with other than Arabic characters. There are eight men and a boy, besides our stately raïs, Hassan Abd el-Sadek, and the swarthy pilot, who greets us every morning with a whole round of Arabic salutations.

Against an upright pole which occupies the place of a mainmast, stands our kitchen, a high wooden box, with three furnaces. Here our cook, Salame, may be seen at all times, with the cowl of a blue capote drawn over his turban, preparing the marvellous dishes, wherein his delight is not less than ours. Salame, like a skilful artist, as he is, husbands his resources, and each day astonishes us with new preparations, so that, out of few materials, he has attained the grand climax of all art—variety in unity. Achmet, my faithful dragoman, has his station here, and keeps one eye on the vessel and one on the kitchen, while between the two he does not relax his protecting care for



us. The approach to the cabin is flanked by our provision chests, which will also serve as a breastwork in case of foreign aggression. A huge filter-jar of porous earthenware stands against the back of the kitchen. We keep our fresh butter and vegetables in a box under it, where the sweet Nile-water drips cool and clear into an earthen basin. Our bread and vegetables, in an open basket of palm-blades, are suspended beside it, and the roof of the cabin supports our poultry-yard and pigeon-house. Sometimes (but not often) a leg of mutton may be seen hanging from the ridge-pole, which extends over the deck as a support to the awning.

The cabin, or Mansion of the Executive Powers, is about twenty-five feet long. Its floor is two feet below the deck, and its ceiling five feet above, so that we are not cramped or crowded in any particular. Before the entrance is a sort of portico, with a broad, cushioned seat on each side, and side-awnings to shut out the sun. This place is devoted to pipes and meditation. We throw up the awnings, let the light pour in on all sides, and look out on the desert mountains while we inhale the incense of the East. Our own main cabin is about ten feet long, and newly painted of a brilliant blue color. A broad divan, with cushions, extends along each side, serving as a sofa by day, and a bed by night. There are windows, blinds, and a canvas cover at the sides, so that we can regulate our light and air as we choose. In the middle of the cabin is our table and two camp stools, while shawls, capotes, pistols, sabre and gun are suspended from the walls. A little door at the further end opens into a wash-room, beyond which is a smaller cabin with beds, which we have allotted to Achmet's use. Our cook sleeps on deck, with his head against the provision chest. The

rais and pilot sleep on the roof of our cabin, where the latter sits all day, holding the long arm of the rudder, which projects forward over the cabin from the high end of the stern.

Our manner of life is simple, and might even be called monotonous, but we have never found the greatest variety of landscape and incident so thoroughly enjoyable. The scenery of the Nile, thus far, scarcely changes from day to day, in its forms and colors, but only in their disposition with regard to each other. The shores are either palm-groves, fields of cane and dourra, young wheat, or patches of bare sand, blown out from the desert. The villages are all the same agglomerations of mud-walls, the tombs of the Moslem saints are the same white ovens, and every individual camel and buffalo resembles its neighbor in picturesque ugliness. The Arabian and Libyan Mountains, now sweeping so far into the foreground that their yellow cliffs overhang the Nile, now receding into the violet haze of the horizon, exhibit little difference of height, hue, or geological formation. Every new scene is the turn of a kaleidoscope, in which the same objects are grouped in other relations, yet always characterized by the most perfect harmony. These slight, yet ever-renewing changes, are to us a source of endless delight. Either from the pure atmosphere, the healthy life we lead, or the accordant tone of our spirits, we find ourselves unusually sensitive to all the slightest touches, the most minute rays of that grace and harmony which bathes every landscape in cloudless sunshine. The various groupings of the palms, the shifting of the blue evening shadows on the rose-hued mountain walls, the green of the wheat and sugarcane, the windings of the great river, the alternations of wind and calm—each of these is enough to content us, and to give every

day a different charm from that which went before. We meet contrary winds, calms and sand-banks without losing our patience, and even our excitement in the swiftness and grace with which our vessel scuds before the north-wind is mingled with a regret that our journey is drawing so much the more swiftly to its close. A portion of the old Egyptian repose seems to be infused into our natures, and lately, when I saw my face in a mirror, I thought I perceived in its features something of the patience and resignation of the Sphinx.

Although, in order to enjoy this life as much as possible, we subject ourselves to no arbitrary rules, there is sufficient regularity in our manner of living. We rise before the sun, and after breathing the cool morning air half an hour, drink a cup of coffee and go ashore for a walk, unless the wind is very strong in our favor. My friend, who is an enthusiastic sportsman and an admirable shot, takes his fowling-piece, and I my sketch-book and pistols. We wander inland among the fields of wheat and dourra, course among the palms and acacias for game, or visit the villages of the Fellahs. The temperature, which is about 60° in the morning, rarely rises above 75°, so that we have every day three or four hours exercise in the mild and pure air. My friend always brings back from one to two dozen pigeons, while I, who practise with my pistol on such ignoble game as hawks and vultures, which are here hardly shy enough to shoot, can at the best but furnish a few wing feathers to clean our pipes.

It is advisable to go armed on these excursions, though there is no danger of open hostility on the part of the people. Certain neighborhoods, as that of Beni Hassan, are in bad repute, but the depredations of the inhabitants, who have been disarmed by the Government, are principally confined to thiev-

ing and other petty offences. On one occasion I fell in with a company of these people, who demanded my tarboosh, shoes and shawl, and would have taken them had I not been armed. In general, we have found the Fellahs very friendly and well disposed. They greet us on our morning walks with "*Salamât!*" and "*Sâbah el Kheyr!*" and frequently accompany us for miles. My friend's fowling-piece often brings around him all the men and boys of a village, who follow him as long as a pigeon is to be found on the palm-trees. The certainty of his shot excites their wonder. "Wallah!" they cry; "every time the Howadji fires, the bird drops." The fact of my wearing a tarboosh and white turban brings upon me much Arabic conversation, which is somewhat embarrassing, with my imperfect knowledge of the language; but a few words go a great way. The first day I adopted this head-dress (which is convenient and agreeable in every respect), the people saluted me with "good morning, O Sidi!" (Sir, or Lord) instead of the usual "good morning, O Howadji!" (*i. e.* merchant, as the Franks are rather contemptuously designated by the Arabs).

For this climate and this way of life, the Egyptian costume is undoubtedly much better than the European. It is light, cool, and does not impede the motion of the limbs. The turban thoroughly protects the head against the sun, and shades the eyes, while it obstructs the vision much less than a hat-brim. The broad silk shawl which holds up the baggy trowsers, shields the abdomen against changes of temperature and tends to prevent diarrhoea, which, besides ophthalmia, is the only ailment the traveller need fear. The latter disease may be avoided by bathing the face in cold water after walking or any exercise which induces perspiration. I have followed this plan, and though my eyes are exposed daily to the full blaze of the sun,

find them growing stronger and clearer. In fact, since leaving the invigorating camp-life of California, I have not felt the sensation of health so purely as now. The other day, to the great delight of our sailors and the inexhaustible merriment of my friend, I donned one of Achmet's dresses. Though the short Theban's flowing trowsers and embroidered jacket gave me the appearance of a strapping Turk, who had grown too fast for his garments, they were so easy and convenient in every respect, that I have decided to un-Frank myself for the remainder of the journey.

But our day is not yet at an end. We come on board about eleven o'clock, and find our breakfast ready for the table. The dishes are few, but well cooked, and just what a hungry man would desire—fowls, pigeons, eggs, rice, vegetables, fruit, the coarse but nourishing bread of the country, and the sweet water of the Nile, brought to a blush by an infusion of claret. After breakfast we seat ourselves on the airy divans in front of the cabin, and quietly indulge in the luxury of a shebook, filled by Achmet's experienced hand, and a *finjan* of Turkish coffee. Then comes an hour's exercise in Arabic, after which we read guide-books, consult our maps, write letters, and occupy ourselves with various mysteries of our household, till the noonday heat is over. Dinner, which is served between four and five o'clock, is of the same materials as our breakfast, but differently arranged, and with the addition of soup. My friend avers that he no longer wonders why Esau sold his birthright, now that he has tasted our pottage of Egyptian lentils. Coffee and pipes follow dinner, which is over with the first flush of sunset and the first premonition of the coolness and quiet of evening.

We seat ourselves on deck, and drink to its fulness the balm of this indescribable repose. The sun goes down behind the Libyan Desert in a broad glory of purple and rosy lights; the Nile is calm and unruffled, the palms stand as if sculptured in jasper and malachite, and the torn and ragged sides of the Arabian Mountains, pouring through a hundred fissures the sand of the plains above, burn with a deep crimson lustre, as if smouldering from some inward fire. The splendor soon passes off and they stand for some minutes in dead, ashy paleness. The sunset has now deepened into orange, in the midst of which a large planet shines whiter than the moon. A second glow falls upon the mountains, and this time of a pale, but intense yellow hue, which gives them the effect of a transparent painting. The palm-groves are dark below and the sky dark behind them; they alone, the symbols of perpetual desolation, are transfigured by the magical illumination. Scarcely a sound disturbs the solemn magnificence of the hour. Even our full-throated Arabs are silent, and if a wave gurgles against the prow, it slides softly back into the river, as if rebuked for the venture. We speak but little, and then mostly in echoes of each other's thoughts. "This is more than mere enjoyment of Nature," said my friend, on such an evening: "it is worship."

Speaking of my friend, it is no more than just that I should confess how much of the luck of this Nile voyage is owing to him, and therein may be the secret of my complete satisfaction and the secret of the disappointment of others. It is more easy and yet more difficult for persons to harmonize while travelling, than when at home. By this I mean, that men of kindred natures and aims find each other more readily

and confide in each other more freely, while the least jarring element rapidly drives others further and further apart. No confessional so completely reveals the whole man as the companionship of travel. It is not possible to wear the conventional masks of Society, and one repulsive feature is often enough to neutralize many really good qualities. On the other hand, a congeniality of soul and temperament speedily ripens into the firmest friendship and doubles every pleasure which is mutually enjoyed. My companion widely differs from me in age, in station, and in his experiences of life; but to one of those open, honest and loving natures which are often found in his native Saxony, he unites a most warm and thorough appreciation of Beauty in Nature or Art. We harmonize to a miracle, and the parting with him at Assouan will be the sorest pang of my journey.

My friend, the Howadjî, in whose "Nile-Notes" the Egyptian atmosphere is so perfectly reproduced, says that "Conscience falls asleep on the Nile." If by this he means that artificial quality which bigots and sectarians call Conscience, I quite agree with him, and do not blame the Nile for its soporific powers. But that simple faculty of the soul, native to all men, which acts best when it acts unconsciously, and leads our passions and desires into right paths without seeming to lead them, is vastly strengthened by this quiet and healthy life. There is a cathedral-like solemnity in the air of Egypt; one feels the presence of the altar, and is a better man without his will. To those rendered misanthropic by disappointed ambition—mistrustful by betrayed confidence—despairing by unassuageable sorrow—let me repeat the motto which heads this chapter.

I have endeavored to picture our mode of life as faithfully and minutely as possible. because it bears no resemblance to travel in any other part of the world. Into the heart of a barbarous continent and a barbarous land, we carry with us every desirable comfort and luxury. In no part of Europe or America could we be so thoroughly independent, without undergoing considerable privations, and wholly losing that sense of rest which is the greatest enjoyment of this journey. We are cut off from all communication with the great world of politics, merchandise and usury, and remember it only through the heart, not through the brain. We go ashore in the delicious mornings, breathe the elastic air, and wander through the palm-groves, as happy and care-free as two Adams in a Paradise without Eves. It is an episode which will flow forward in the under-currents of our natures through the rest of our lives, soothing and refreshing us whenever it rises to the surface. I do not reproach myself for this passive and sensuous existence. I give myself up to it unreservedly, and if some angular-souled utilitarian should come along and recommend me to shake off my laziness, and learn the conjugations of Coptic verbs or the hieroglyphs of Kneph and Thoth, I should not take the pipe from my mouth to answer him. My friend sometimes laughingly addresses me with two lines of Hebel's quaint Allemanic poetry :

“Ei solch a Leben, junges Blut,  
Desh ish wohl für a Thierle guat.”

(such a life, young blood, best befits an animal), but I tell him that the wisdom of the Black Forest won't answer for the Nile. If any one persists in forcing the application, I prefer



being called an animal to changing my present habits. An entire life so spent would be wretchedly aimless, but a few months are in truth "sore labor's bath" to every wrung heart and overworked brain.

I could say much more, but it requires no little effort to write three hours in a cabin, when the palms are rustling their tops outside, the larks singing in the meadows, and the odor of mimosa flowers breathing through the windows. To travel and write, is like inhaling and exhaling one's breath at the same moment. You take in impressions at every pore of the mind, and the process is so pleasant, that you sweat them out again most reluctantly. Lest I should overtake the remedy with the disease, and make to-day Labor, which should be Rest, I shall throw down the pen, and mount yonder donkey, which stands patiently on the bank, waiting to carry me to Siout once more, before starting for Thebes.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## UPPER EGYPT.

Calm—Mountains and Tombs—A Night Adventure in Ekhmin—Character of the Boatmen—Fair Wind—Pilgrims—Egyptian Agriculture—Sugar and Cotton—Grain—Sheep—Arrival at Kenneh—A Landscape—The Temple of Dendera—First Impressions of Egyptian Art—Portrait of Cleopatra—A Happy Meeting—We approach Thebes.

OUR men were ready at the appointed time, and precisely twenty-four hours after reaching the port of Siout we spread our sails for Kenneh, and exchanged a parting salute with the boat of a New York physician, which arrived some hours after us. The north wind, which had been blowing freshly during the whole of our stay, failed us almost within sight of the port, and was followed by three days of breathless calm, during which time we made about twelve miles a day, by towing. My friend and I spent half the time on shore, wandering inland through the fields and making acquaintances in the villages. We found such tours highly interesting and refreshing, but nevertheless always returned to our floating Castle of Indolence, doubly delighted with its home-like cabin and lazy divans. Many of the villages in this region are built among the mounds of ancient cities, the names whereof are faithfully enumerated in the guide-book, but as the cities themselves have

wholly disappeared, we were spared the necessity of seeking for their ruins.

On the third night after leaving Siout, we passed the village of Gow el-Kebir, the ancient Antæopolis, whose beautiful temple has been entirely destroyed during the last twenty-five years, partly washed away by the Nile and partly pulled down to furnish materials for the Pasha's palace at Siout. Near this the famous battle between Hercules and Antæus is reported to have taken place. The fable of Antæus drawing strength from the earth appears quite natural, after one has seen the fatness of the soil of Upper Egypt. We ran the gauntlet of Djebel Shekh Hereedee, a mountain similar to Aboufayda in form, but much more lofty and imposing. It has also its legend: A miraculous serpent, say the Arabs, has lived for centuries in its caverns, and possesses the power of healing diseases. All these mountains, on the eastern bank of the Nile, are pierced with tombs, and the openings are sometimes so frequent and so near to each other as to resemble a colonnade along the rocky crests. They rarely contain inscriptions, and many of them were inhabited by hermits and holy men, during the early ages of Christianity. At the most accessible points the Egyptians have commenced limestone quarries, and as they are more concerned in preserving piastres than tombs, their venerable ancestors are dislodged without scruple. Whoever is interested in Egyptian antiquities, should not postpone his visit longer. Not only Turks, but Europeans are engaged in the work of demolition, and the very antiquarians who profess the greatest enthusiasm for these monuments, are ruthless Vandals towards them when they have the power.

We dashed past the mountain of Shekh Hereedee in gallant style, and the same night, after dusk, reached Ekhmin, the ancient Panopolis. This was one of the oldest cities in Egypt, and dedicated to the Phallic worship, whose first symbol, the obelisk, has now a purely monumental significance. A few remnants of this singular ancient faith appear to be retained among the modern inhabitants of Ekhmin, but only in the grossest superstitions, and without reference to the abstract creative principle typified by the Phallic emblems. The early Egyptians surrounded with mystery and honored with all religious solemnity what they regarded as the highest human miracle wrought by the power of their gods, and in a philosophical point of view, there is no branch of their complex faith more interesting than this.

As we sat on the bank in the moonlight, quietly smoking our pipes, the howling of a company of dervishes sounded from the town, whose walls are a few hundred paces distant from the river. We inquired of the guard whether a Frank dare visit them. He could not tell, but offered to accompany me and try to procure an entrance. I took Achmet and two of our sailors, donned a Bedouin capote, and set out in search of the dervishes. The principal gate of the town was closed, and my men battered it vainly with their clubs, to rouse the guard. We wandered for some time among the mounds of Panopolis, stumbling over blocks of marble and granite, under palms eighty feet high, standing clear and silvery in the moonlight. At last, the clamor of the wolfish dogs we waked up on the road, brought us one of the watchers outside of the walls, whom we requested to admit us into the city. He replied that this could not be done. "But," said Achmet, "here is

an Effendi who has just arrived, and must visit the mollahs to-night; admit him and fear nothing." The men thereupon conducted us to another gate and threw a few pebbles against the window above it. A woman's voice replied, and presently the bolts were undrawn and we entered. By this time the dervishes had ceased their howlings, and every thing was as still as death. We walked for half an hour through the deserted streets, visited the mosques and public buildings, and heard no sound but our own steps. It was a strangely interesting promenade. The Arabs, armed with clubs, carried a paper lantern, which flickered redly on the arches and courts we passed through. My trusty Theban walked by my side, and took all possible trouble to find the retreat of the dervishes—but in vain. We passed out through the gate, which was instantly locked behind us, and had barely reached our vessel, when the unearthly song of the Moslem priests, louder and wilder than ever, came to our ears.

The prejudice of the Mohammedans against the Christians is wearing away with their familiarity with the Frank dress and their adoption of Frankish vices. The Prophet's injunction against wine is heeded by few of his followers, or avoided by drinking *arakee*, a liquor distilled from dates and often flavored with hemp. Their conscience is generally satisfied with a pilgrimage to Mecca and the daily performance of the prescribed prayers, though the latter is often neglected. All of my sailors were very punctual in this respect, spreading their carpets on the forward deck, and occupying an hour or two every day with genuflexions, prostrations, and salutations toward Mecca, the direction of which they never lost, notwithstanding the windings of the Nile. In the cathedrals of Chris-

tian Europe I have often seen pantomimes quite as unnecessary, performed with less apparent reverence. The people of Egypt are fully as honest and well-disposed as the greater part of the Italian peasantry. They sometimes deceive in small things, and are inclined to take trifling advantages, but that is the natural result of living under a government whose only rule is force, and which does not even hesitate to use fraud. Their good humor is inexhaustible. A single friendly word wins them, and even a little severity awakes no lasting feeling of revenge. I should much rather trust myself alone among the Egyptian Fellahs, than among the peasants of the Campagna, or the boors of Carinthia. Notwithstanding our men had daily opportunities of plundering us, we never missed a single article. We frequently went ashore with our dragoman, leaving every thing in the cabin exposed, and especially such articles as tobacco, shot, dates, &c., which would most tempt an Arab, yet our confidence was never betrayed. We often heard complaints from travellers in other boats, but I am satisfied that any one who will enforce obedience at the start, and thereafter give none but just and reasonable commands, need have no difficulty with his crew.

The next morning, the wind being light, we walked forward to El Menschieh, a town about nine miles distant from Ekhmin. It was market-day, and the bazaar was crowded with the countrymen, who had brought their stock of grain, sugar-cane and vegetables. The men were taller and more muscular than in Lower Egypt, and were evidently descended from a more intelligent and energetic stock. They looked at us curiously, but with a sort of friendly interest, and courteously made way for us as we passed through the narrow ba-

zaar. In the afternoon the wind increased to a small gale, and bore us rapidly past Gebel Tookh to the city of Girgeh, so named in Coptic times from the Christian saint, George. Like Manfalout, it has been half washed away by the Nile, and two lofty minarets were hanging on the brink of the slippery bank, awaiting their turn to fall. About twelve miles from Girgeh, in the Libyan Desert, are the ruins of Abydus, now covered by the sand, except the top of the portico and roof of the temple-palace of Sesostris, and part of the temple of Osiris. We held a council whether we should waste the favorable wind or miss Abydus, and the testimony of Achmet, who had visited the ruins, having been taken, we chose the latter alternative. By this time Girgeh was nearly out of sight, and we comforted ourselves with the hope of soon seeing Dendera.

The pilgrims to Mecca, by the Kenneh and Kosseir route, were on their return, and we met a number of boats, crowded with them, on their way to Cairo from the former place. Most of the boats carried the red flag, with the star and crescent. On the morning after leaving Girgeh, we took a long stroll through the fields of Farshoot, which is, after Siout, the richest agricultural district of Upper Egypt. An excellent system of irrigation, by means of canals, is kept up, and the result shows what might be made of Egypt, were its great natural resources rightly employed. The Nile offers a perpetual fountain of plenty and prosperity, and its long valley, from Nubia to the sea, would become, in other hands, the garden of the world. So rich and pregnant a soil I have never seen. Here, side by side, flourish wheat, maize, cotton, sugar-cane, indigo, hemp, rice, dourra, tobacco, olives, dates, oranges, and

the vegetables and fruits of nearly every climate. The wheat, which, in November, we found young and green, would in March be ripe for the sickle, and the people were cutting and threshing fields of dourra, which they had planted towards the end of summer. Except where the broad meadows are first reclaimed from the rank, tufted grass which has taken possession of them, the wheat is sowed upon the ground, and then ploughed in by a sort of crooked wooden beam, shod with iron, and drawn by two camels or buffaloes. I saw no instance in which the soil was manured. The yearly deposit made by the bountiful river seems to be sufficient. The natives, it is true, possess immense numbers of pigeons, and every village is adorned with towers, rising above the mud huts like the pylons of temples, and inhabited by these birds. The manure collected from them is said to be used, but probably only in the culture of melons, cucumbers, and other like vegetables with which the gardens are stocked.

The fields of sugar-cane about Farshoot were the richest I saw in Egypt. Near the village, which is three miles from the Nile, there is a steam sugar-refinery, established by Ibrahim Pasha, who seems to have devoted much attention to the culture of cane, with a view to his own profit. There are several of these manufactories along the Nile, and the most of them were in full operation, as we passed. At Radamoon, between Minyeh and Siout, there is a large manufactory, where the common coarse sugar made in the Fellah villages is refined and sent to Cairo. We made use of this sugar in our household, and found it to be of excellent quality, though coarser than that of the American manufactories. The culture of cotton has not been so successful. The large and handsome manufac-



tory built at Kenneh, is no longer in operation, and the fields which we saw there, had a forlorn, neglected appearance. The plants grow luxuriantly, and the cotton is of fine quality, but the pods are small and not very abundant. About Siout, and in Middle and Lower Egypt, we saw many fields of indigo, which is said to thrive well. Peas, beans and lentils are cultivated to a great extent, and form an important item of the food of the inhabitants. The only vegetables we could procure for our kitchen, were onions, radishes, lettuce and spinage. The Arabs are very fond of the tops of radishes, and eat them with as much relish as their donkeys.

One of the principal staples of Egypt is the dourra (*holcus sorghum*), which resembles the *zea* (maize) in many respects. In appearance, it is very like broom-corn, but instead of the long, loose panicle of red seeds, is topped by a compact cone of grains, smaller than those of maize, but resembling them in form and taste. The stalks are from ten to fifteen feet high, and the heads frequently contain as much substance as two ears of maize. It is planted in close rows, and when ripe is cut by the hand with a short sickle, after which the heads are taken off and threshed separately. The grain is fed to horses, donkeys and fowls, and in Upper Egypt is used almost universally for bread. It is of course very imperfectly ground, and unbolted, and the bread is coarse and dark, though nourishing. In the Middle and Southern States of America this grain would thrive well and might be introduced with advantage.

The plains of coarse, wiry grass (*halfah*), which in many points on the Nile show plainly the neglect of the inhabitants, who by a year's labor might convert them into blooming fields, are devoted to the pasturage of large herds of sheep, and goats,

and sometimes droves of buffaloes. The sheep are all black or dark-brown, and their bushy heads remind one of terriers. The wool is rather coarse, and when roughly spun and woven by the Arabs, in its natural color, forms the mantle, something like a Spanish *poncho*, which is usually the Fellah's only garment. The mutton, almost the only meat to be found, is generally lean, and brings a high price, considering the abundance of sheep. The flesh of buffaloes is eaten by the Arabs, but is too tough, and has too rank a flavor, for Christian stomachs. The goats are beautiful animals, with heads as slender and delicate as those of gazelles. They have short, black horns, curving downward—long, silky ears, and a peculiarly mild and friendly expression of countenance. We had no difficulty in procuring milk in the villages, and sometimes fresh butter, which was more agreeable to the taste than the sight. The mode of churning is not calculated to excite one's appetite. The milk is tied up in a goat's skin, and suspended by a rope to the branch of a tree. One of the Arab housewives (who are all astonishingly ugly and filthy) then stations herself on one side, and propels it backward and forward till the process is completed. The cheese of the country resembles a mixture of sand and slacked lime, and has an abominable flavor.

Leaving Farshoot, we swept rapidly past Haou, the ancient *Diospolis parva*, or Little Thebes, of which nothing is left but some heaps of dirt, sculptured fragments, and the tomb of a certain Dionysius, son of a certain Ptolemy. The course of the mountains, which follow the Nile, is here nearly east and west, as the river makes a long curve to the eastward on approaching Kenneh. The valley is inclosed within narrower bounds, and the Arabian Mountains on the north, shooting out

into bold promontories from the main chain, sometimes rise from the water's edge in bluffs many hundred feet in height. The good wind, which had so befriended us for three days, followed us all night, and when we awoke on the morning of December 4th, our vessel lay at anchor in the port of Kenneh, having beaten by four hours the boat of our American friend, which was reputed to be one of the swiftest on the river.

Kenneh, which lies about a mile east of the river, is celebrated for the manufacture of porous water-jars, and is an inferior mart of trade with Persia and India, by means of Kosseir, on the Red Sea, one hundred and twenty miles distant. The town is large, but mean in aspect, and does not offer a single object of interest. It lies in the centre of a broad plain. We rode through the bazaars, which were tolerably well stocked and crowded with *hadji*, or pilgrims of Mecca. My friend, who wished to make a flag of the Saxe-Coburg colors, for his return voyage, tried in vain to procure a piece of green cotton cloth. Every other color was to be had but green, which, as the sacred hue, worn only by the descendants of Mohammed, was nowhere to be found. He was finally obliged to buy a piece of white stuff and have it specially dyed. It came back the same evening, precisely the color of the Shereef of Mecca's turban.

On the western bank of the Nile, opposite Kenneh, is the site of the city of Tentyra, famed for its temple of Athor. It is now called Dendera, from the modern Arab village. After breakfast, we shipped ourselves and our donkeys across the Nile, and rode off in high excitement, to make our first acquaintance with Egyptian temples. The path led through a palm grove, which in richness and beauty rivalled those of the

Mexican *tierra caliente*. The lofty shafts of the date and the vaulted foliage of the doum-palm, blended in the most picturesque groupage, contrasted with the lace-like texture of the flowering mimosa, and the cloudy boughs of a kind of gray cypress. The turf under the trees was soft and green, and between the slim trunks we looked over the plain, to the Libyan Mountains—a long train of rosy lights and violet shadows. Out of this lovely wood we passed between magnificent fields of dourra and the castor-oil bean, fifteen feet in height, to a dyke which crossed the meadows to Dendera. The leagues of rank grass on our right rolled away to the Desert in shining billows, and the fresh west-wind wrapped us in a bath of intoxicating odors. In the midst of this green and peaceful plain rose the earthy mounds of Tentyra, and the portico of the temple, almost buried beneath them, stood like a beacon, marking the boundary of the Desert.

We galloped our little animals along the dyke, over heaps of dirt and broken bricks, among which a number of Arabs were burrowing for nitrous earth, and dismounted at a small pylon, which stands two or three hundred paces in front of the temple. The huge jambs of sandstone, covered with sharply cut hieroglyphics and figures of the Egyptian gods, and surmounted by a single block, bearing the mysterious winged globe and serpent, detained us but a moment, and we hurried down what was once the dromos of the temple, now represented by a double wall of unburnt bricks. The portico, more than a hundred feet in length, and supported by six columns, united by screens of masonry, no stone of which, or of the columns themselves, is unsculptured, is massive and imposing, but struck me as being too depressed to produce a very grand effect. What was my

astonishment, on arriving at the entrance, to find that I had approached the temple on a level with half its height, and that the pavement of the portico was as far below as the scrolls of its cornice were above me. The six columns I had seen covered three other rows, of six each, all adorned with the most elaborate sculpture and exhibiting traces of the brilliant coloring which they once possessed. The entire temple, which is in an excellent state of preservation, except where the hand of the Coptic Christian has defaced its sculptures, was cleaned out by order of Mohammed Ali, and as all its chambers, as well as the roof of enormous sand-stone blocks, are entire, it is considered one of the most complete relics of Egyptian art.

I find my pen at fault, when I attempt to describe the impression produced by the splendid portico. The twenty-four columns, each of which is sixty feet in height, and eight feet in diameter, crowded upon a surface of one hundred feet by seventy, are oppressive in their grandeur. The dim light, admitted through the half closed front, which faces the north, spreads a mysterious gloom around these mighty shafts, crowned with the fourfold visage of Athor, still rebuking the impious hands that have marred her solemn beauty. On the walls, between columns of hieroglyphics, and the cartouches of the Cæsars and the Ptolemies, appear the principal Egyptian deities—the rigid Osiris, the stately Isis and the hawk-headed Orus. Around the bases of the columns spring the leaves of the sacred lotus, and the dark-blue ceiling is spangled with stars, between the wings of the divine emblem. The sculptures are all in raised relief, and there is no stone in the temple without them. I cannot explain to myself the unusual emotion I felt while contemplating this wonderful combination of a

simple and sublime architectural style with the utmost elaboration of ornament. My blood pulsed fast and warm on my first view of the Roman Forum, but in Dendera I was so saddened and oppressed, that I scarcely dared speak for fear of betraying an unmanly weakness. My friend walked silently between the columns, with a face as rigidly sad as if he had just looked on the coffin of his nearest relative. Though such a mood was more painful than agreeable, it required some effort to leave the place, and after a stay of two hours, we still lingered in the portico and walked through the inner halls, under the spell of a fascination which we had hardly power to break.

The portico opens into a hall, supported by six beautiful columns, of smaller proportions, and lighted by a square aperture in the solid roof. On either side are chambers connected with dim and lofty passages, and beyond is the sanctuary and various other apartments, which receive no light from without. We examined their sculptures by the aid of torches, and our Arab attendants kindled large fires of dry corn stalks, which cast a strong red light on the walls. The temple is devoted to Athor, the Egyptian Venus, and her image is everywhere seen, receiving the homage of her worshippers. Even the dark staircase, leading to the roof—up which we climbed over heaps of sand and rubbish—is decorated throughout with processions of symbolical figures. The drawing has little of that grotesque stiffness which I expected to find in Egyptian sculptures, and the execution is so admirable in its gradations of light and shade, as to resemble, at a little distance, a monochromatic painting. The antiquarians view these remains with little interest, as they date from the comparatively recent era of the Ptolemies, at which time sculpture and architecture were on

the decline. We, who had seen nothing else of the kind, were charmed with the grace and elegance of this sumptuous mode of decoration. Part of the temple was built by Cleopatra, whose portrait, with that of her son Cæsarion, may still be seen on the exterior wall. The face of the colossal figure has been nearly destroyed, but there is a smaller one, whose soft, voluptuous outline is still sufficient evidence of the justness of her renown. The profile is exquisitely beautiful. The forehead and nose approach the Greek standard, but the mouth is more roundly and delicately curved, and the chin and cheek are fuller. Were such an outline made plastic, were the blank face colored with a pale olive hue, through which should blush a faint, rosy tinge, lighted with bold black eyes and irradiated with the lightning of a passionate nature, it would even now 'move the mighty hearts of captains and of kings.'

Around the temple and over the mounds of the ancient city are scattered the ruins of an Arab village which the inhabitants suddenly deserted, without any apparent reason, two or three years previous to our visit. Behind it, stretches the yellow sand of the Desert. The silence and aspect of desertion harmonize well with the spirit of the place, which would be much disturbed were one beset, as is usual in the Arab towns, by a gang of naked beggars and barking wolf-dogs. Besides the temple, there are also the remains of a chapel of Isis, with a pylon, erected by Augustus Cæsar, and a small temple, nearly whelmed in the sand, supposed to be one of the *mammeisi*, or lying-in houses of the goddess Athor, who was honored in this form, on account of having given birth to the third member of the divine Triad.

At sunset, we rode back from Dendera and set sail for

Thebes. In the evening, as we were sweeping along by moonlight, with a full wind, a large *dahabiyeh* came floating down the stream. Achmet, who was on the look-out, saw the American flag, and we hailed her. My delight was unbounded, to hear in reply the voice of my friend, Mr. Degen, of New York, who, with his lady and two American and English gentlemen, were returning from a voyage to Assouan. Both boats instantly made for the shore, and for the first time since leaving Germany I had the pleasure of seeing familiar faces. For the space of three hours I forgot Thebes and the north wind, but towards midnight we exchanged a parting salute of four guns and shook out the broad sails of the Cleopatra, who leaned her cheek to the waves and shot off like a sea-gull. I am sure she must have looked beautiful to my friends, as they stood on deck in the moonlight.



## CHAPTER IX.

## THEBES—THE WESTERN BANK.

Arrival at Thebes—Ground-Plan of the Remains—We Cross to the Western Bank—Guides—The Temple of Goorneh—Valley of the Kings' Tombs—Belzoni's Tomb—The Races of Men—Vandalism of Antiquarians—Bruce's Tomb—Memnon—The Grandfather of Sesostris—The Head of Amunoph—The Colossi of the Plain—Memnonian Music—The Statue of Remeses—The Memnonium—Beauty of Egyptian Art—More Scrambles among the Tombs—The Bats of the Assassaeef—Medeenet Abou—Sculptured Histories—The Great Court of the Temple—We return to Luxor.

ON the following evening, about nine o'clock, as my friend and I were taking our customary evening pipe in the cabin, our vessel suddenly stopped. The wind was still blowing, and I called to Achmet to know what was the matter. "We have reached Luxor," answered the Theban. We dropped the she-books, dashed out, up the bank, and saw, facing us in the brilliant moonlight, the grand colonnade of the temple, the solid wedges of the pylon, and the brother-obelisk of that which stands in the Place de la Concorde, in Paris. The wide plain of Thebes stretched away on either hand, and the beautiful outlines of the three mountain ranges which inclose it, rose in the distance against the stars. We looked on the landscape a few moments, in silence. "Come," said my friend, at length, "this is enough for to-night. Let us not be too

hasty to exhaust what is in store for us." So we returned to our cabin, closed the blinds, and arranged our plans for best seeing, and best enjoying the wonders of the great Diospolis.

Before commencing my recital, let me attempt to give an outline of the typography of Thebes. The course of the Nile is here nearly north, dividing the site of the ancient city into two almost equal parts. On approaching it from Kenneh, the mountain of Goorneh, which abuts on the river, marks the commencement of the western division. This mountain, a range of naked limestone crags, terminating in a pyramidal peak, gradually recedes to the distance of three miles from the Nile, which it again approaches further south. Nearly the whole of the curve, which might be called the western wall of the city, is pierced with tombs, among which are those of the queens, and the grand priestly vaults of the Assasseef. The Valley of the Kings' Tombs lies deep in the heart of the range seven or eight miles from the river. After passing the corner of the mountain, the first ruin on the western bank is that of the temple-palace of Goorneh. More than a mile further, at the base of the mountain, is the Memnonium, or temple of Remeses the Great, between which and the Nile the two Memnonian colossi are seated on the plain. Nearly two miles to the south of this is the great temple of Medeenet Abou, and the fragments of other edifices are met with, still further beyond. On the eastern bank, nearly opposite Goorneh, stands the temple of Karnak, about half a mile from the river. Eight miles eastward, at the foot of the Arabian Mountains, is the small temple of Medamot, which, however, does not appear to have been included in the limits of Thebes. Luxor is directly on the bank of the Nile, a mile and a half south of

Karnak, and the plain extends several miles beyond it, before reaching the isolated range, whose three conical peaks are the landmarks of Thebes to voyagers on the river.

These distances convey an idea of the extent of the ancient city, but fail to represent the grand proportions of the landscape, so well fitted, in its simple and majestic outlines, to inclose the most wonderful structures the world has ever seen. The green expanse of the plain; the airy coloring of the mountains; the mild, solemn blue of the cloudless Egyptian sky;—these are a part of Thebes, and inseparable from the remembrance of its ruins.

At sunrise we crossed to the western bank and moored our boat opposite Goorneh. It is advisable to commence with the Tombs, and close the inspection of that side with Medeenet Abou, reserving Karnak, the grandest of all, for the last. The most unimportant objects in Thebes are full of interest when seen first, whereas Karnak, once seen, fills one's thoughts to the exclusion of every thing else. There are Arab guides for each bank, who are quite familiar with all the principal points, and who have a quiet and unobtrusive way of directing the traveller, which I should be glad to see introduced into England and Italy. Our guide, old Achmet Gourgâr, was a tall, lean gray-beard, who wore a white turban and long brown robe, and was most conscientious in his endeavors to satisfy us. We found several horses on the bank, ready saddled, and choosing two of the most promising, set off on a stirring gallop for the temple of Goorneh and the Valley of the Kings' Tombs, leaving Achmet to follow with our breakfast, and the Arab boys with their water bottles.

The temple of Goorneh was built for the worship of Amun,

the Theban Jupiter, by Osirei and his son, Remeses the Great, the supposed Sesostris, nearly fourteen hundred years before the Christian era. It is small, compared with the other ruins, but interesting from its rude and massive style, a remnant of the early period of Egyptian architecture. The two pylons in front of it are shattered down, and the dromos of sphinxes has entirely disappeared. The portico is supported by a single row of ten columns, which neither resemble each other, nor are separated by equal spaces. What is most singular, is the fact that notwithstanding this disproportion, which is also observable in the doorways, the general effect is harmonious. We tried to fathom the secret of this, and found no other explanation than in the lowness of the building, and the rough granite blocks of which it is built. One seeks no proportion in a natural temple of rock, or a cirque of Druid stones. All that the eye requires is rude strength, with a certain approach to order. The effect produced by this temple is of a similar character, barring its historical interest. Its dimensions are too small to be imposing, and I found, after passing it several times, that I valued it more as a feature in the landscape, than for its own sake.

The sand and pebbles clattered under the hoofs of our horses, as we galloped up the gorge of *Biban el Molook*, the "Gates of the Kings." The sides are perpendicular cliffs of yellow rock, which increased in height, the further we advanced, and at last terminated in a sort of basin, shut in by precipices several hundred feet in height and broken into fantastic turrets, gables and pinnacles. The bottom is filled with huge heaps of sand and broken stones, left from the excavation of the tombs in the solid rock. There are twenty-one tombs

in this valley, more than half of which are of great extent and richly adorned with paintings and sculptures. Some have been filled with sand or otherwise injured by the occasional rains which visit this region, while a few are too small and plain to need visiting. Sir Gardner Wilkinson has numbered them all in red chalk at the entrances, which is very convenient to those who use his work on Egypt as a guide. I visited ten of the principal tombs, to the great delight of the old guide, who complained that travellers are frequently satisfied with four or five. The general arrangement is the same in all, but they differ greatly in extent and in the character of their decoration.

The first we entered was the celebrated tomb of Remeses I., discovered by Belzoni. From the narrow entrance, a precipitous staircase, the walls of which are covered with columns of hieroglyphics, descends to a depth of forty feet, where it strikes a horizontal passage leading to an oblong chamber, in which was formerly a deep pit, which Belzoni filled. This pit protected the entrance to the royal chamber, which was also carefully walled up. In the grace and freedom of the drawings, and the richness of their coloring, this tomb surpasses all others. The subjects represented are the victories of the monarch, while in the sepulchral chamber he is received into the presence of the gods. The limestone rock is covered with a fine coating of plaster, on which the figures were first drawn with red chalk, and afterwards carefully finished in colors. The reds, yellows, greens and blues are very brilliant, but seem to have been employed at random, the gods having faces sometimes of one color, sometimes of another. In the furthest chamber, which was left unfinished, the subjects are only

sketched in red chalk. Some of them have the loose and uncertain lines of a pupil's hand, over which one sees the bold and rapid corrections of the master. Many of the figures are remarkable for their strength and freedom of outline. I was greatly interested in a procession of men, representing the different nations of the earth. The physical peculiarities of the Persian, the Jew and the Ethiopian are therein as distinctly marked as at the present day. The blacks are perfect counterparts of those I saw daily upon the Nile, and the noses of the Jews seem newly painted from originals in New York. So little diversity in the distinguishing features of the race, after the lapse of more than three thousand years, is a strong argument in favor of the new ethnological theory of the separate origin of different races. Whatever objections may be urged against this theory, the fact that the races have not materially changed since the earliest historic times, is established by these Egyptian records, and we must either place the first appearance of Man upon the earth many thousands of years in advance of Bishop Usher's chronology, or adopt the conclusion of Morton and Agassiz.

The burial-vault, where Belzoni found the alabaster sarcophagus of the monarch, is a noble hall, thirty feet long by nearly twenty in breadth and height, with four massive pillars forming a corridor on one side. In addition to the light of our torches, the Arabs kindled a large bonfire in the centre, which brought out in strong relief the sepulchral figures on the ceiling, painted in white on a ground of dark indigo hue. The pillars and walls of the vault glowed with the vivid variety of their colors, and the general effect was unspeakably rich and gorgeous. This tomb has already fallen a prey to worse plunderers

than the Medes and Persians. Belzoni carried off the sarcophagus, Champollion cut away the splendid jambs and architrave of the entrance to the lower chambers, and Lepsius has finished by splitting the pillars and appropriating their beautiful paintings for the Museum at Berlin. At one spot, where the latter has totally ruined a fine doorway, some indignant Frenchman has written in red chalk : "*Meurtre commis par Lepsius.*" In all the tombs of Thebes, wherever you see the most flagrant and shameless spoliations, the guide says, "Lepsius." Who can blame the Arabs for wantonly defacing these precious monuments, when such an example is set them by the vanity of European antiquarians?

Bruce's Tomb, which extends for four hundred and twenty feet into the rock, is larger than Belzoni's, but not so fresh and brilliant. The main entrance slopes with a very gradual descent, and has on each side a number of small chambers and niches, apparently for mummies. The illustrations in these chambers are somewhat defaced, but very curious, on account of the light which they throw upon the domestic life of the Ancient Egyptians. They represent the slaughtering of oxen, the preparation of fowls for the table, the kneading and baking of bread and cakes, as well as the implements and utensils of the kitchen. In other places the field laborers are employed in leading the water of the Nile into canals, cutting dourra, threshing and carrying the grain into magazines. One room is filled with furniture, and the row of chairs around the base of the walls would not be out of place in the most elegant modern drawing-room. The Illustrated Catalogue of the London Exhibition contains few richer and more graceful patterns. In a chamber nearer the royal vault, two old, blind minstrels

are seen, playing the harp in the presence of the King, whence this is sometimes called the Harper's Tomb. The pillars of the grand hall, like those of all the other tombs we visited, represent the monarch, after death, received into the presence of the gods—stately figures, with a calm and serious aspect, and lips, which, like those of the Sphinx, seemed closed upon some awful mystery. The absurdity of the coloring does not destroy this effect, and a blue-faced Isis, whose hard, black eye-ball stares from a brilliant white socket, is not less impressive than the same figure, cut in sandstone or granite.

The delicacy and precision of the hieroglyphics, sculptured in intaglio, filled me with astonishment. In the tomb of Amunoph III., which I visited the next day, they resembled the ciphers engraved upon seals in their exquisite sharpness and regularity. Only the principal tombs, however, are thus beautified. In others the figures are either simply painted, or apparently sunken in the plaster, while it was yet fresh, by prepared patterns. The latter method accounts for the exact resemblance of long processions of figures, which would otherwise require a most marvellous skill on the part of the artist. In some unfinished chambers I detected plainly the traces of these patterns, where the outlines of the figures were blunt and the grain of the plaster bent, and not cut. The family likeness in the faces of the monarchs is also too striking, unfortunately, for us to accept them all as faithful portraits. They are all apparently of the same age, and their attributes do not materially differ. This was probably a flattery on the part of the artists, or the effect of a royal vanity, which required to be portrayed in the freshness of youth and the full vigor of body and mind. The first faces I learned to recognize were those of Remeses II., the supposed Sesostris, and Amunoph III.



The tomb of Memnon, as it was called by the Romans, is the most elegant of all, in its proportions, and is as symmetrical as a Grecian temple. On the walls of the entrance are several inscriptions of Greek tourists, who visited it in the era of the Ptolemies, and spent their time in carving their names, like Americans nowadays. The huge granite sarcophagus in which the monarch's mummy was deposited, is broken, as are those of the other tombs, with a single exception. This is the tomb of Osirei I., the grandfather of Sesostris, and the oldest in the valley. I visited it by crawling through a hole barely large enough to admit my body, after which I slid on my back down a passage nearly choked with sand, to another hole, opening into the burial chamber. Here no impious hand had defaced the walls, but the figures were as perfect and the coloring as brilliant as when first executed. In the centre stood an immense sarcophagus, of a single block of red granite, and the massive lid, which had been thrown off, lay beside it. The dust in the bottom gave out that peculiar mummy odor perceptible in all the tombs, and in fact long after one has left them, for the clothes become saturated with it. The guide, delighted with having dragged me into that chamber, buried deep in the lumb heart of the mountain, said not a word, and from the awful stillness of the place and the phantasmagoric gleam of the wonderful figures on the walls, I could have imagined myself a neophyte, on the threshold of the Osirian mysteries.

We rode to the Western Valley, a still deeper and wider glen, containing tombs of the kings of the foreign dynasty of Atin-Re. We entered the two principal ones, but found the paintings rude and insignificant. There are many lateral passages and chambers and in some places deep pits, along the

edge of which we were obliged to crawl. In the last tomb a very long and steep staircase descends into the rock. As we were groping after the guide, I called to my friend to take care, as there was but a single step, after making a slip. The words were scarcely out of my mouth before I felt a tremendous thump, followed by a number of smaller ones, and found myself sitting in a heap of sand, at the bottom, some twenty or thirty feet below. Fortunately, I came off with but a few slight bruises.

Returning to the temple of Goorneh, we took a path over the plain, through fields of wheat, lupins and lentils, to the two colossi, which we had already seen from a distance. These immense sitting figures, fifty-three feet above the plain, which has buried their pedestals, overlook the site of vanished Thebes and assert the grandeur of which they and Karnak are the most striking remains. They were erected by Amunoph III., and though the faces are totally disfigured, the full, round, beautiful proportions of the colossal arms, shoulders and thighs do not belie the marvellous sweetness of the features which we still see in his tomb. Except the head of Antinous, I know of no ancient portrait so beautiful as Amunoph. The long and luxuriant hair, flowing in a hundred ringlets, the soft grace of the forehead, the mild serenity of the eye, the fine thin lines of the nostrils and the feminine tenderness of the full lips, triumph over the cramped rigidity of Egyptian sculpture, and charm you with the lightness and harmony of Greek art. In looking on that head, I cannot help thinking that the subject overpowered the artist, and led him to the threshold of a truer art. Amunoph, or Memnon, was a poet in soul, and it was meet that his statue should salute the rising sun with a sound like that of a harp-string.

Modern research has wholly annihilated this beautiful fable. Memnon now sounds at all hours of the day, and at the command of all travellers who pay an Arab five piastres to climb into his lap. We engaged a vender of modern scarabei, who threw off his garments, hooked his fingers and toes into the cracks of the polished granite, and soon hailed us with "Salaam!" from the knee of the statue. There is a certain stone on Memnon's lap, which, when sharply struck, gives out a clear metallic ring. Behind it is a small square aperture, invisible from below, where one of the priests no doubt stationed himself to perform the daily miracle. Our Arab rapped on the arms and body of the statue, which had the usual dead sound of stone, and rendered the musical ring of the sun-smitten block more striking. An avenue of sphinxes once led from the colossi to a grand temple, the foundations of which we found about a quarter of a mile distant. On the way are the fragments of two other colossi, one of black granite. The enormous substructions of the temple and the pedestals of its columns have been sufficiently excavated to show what a superb edifice has been lost to the world. A crowd of troublesome Arabs, thrusting upon our attention newly baken cinerary urns, newly roasted antique wheat, and images of all kinds fresh from the maker's hand, disturbed our quiet examination of the ruins, and in order to escape their importunities, we rode to the Memnonium.

This edifice, the temple-palace of Remeses the Great, is supposed to be the Memnonium, described by Strabo. It is built on a gentle rise of land at the foot of the mountain, and looks eastward to the Nile and Luxor. The grand stone pylon which stands at the entrance of its former avenue of

sphinxes has been half levelled by the fury of the Persian conquerors, and the colossal granite statue of Remeses, in the first court of the temple, now lies in enormous fragments around its pedestal. Mere dimensions give no idea of this immense mass, the weight of which, when entire, was nearly nine hundred tons. How poor and trifling appear the modern statues which we call colossal, when measured with this, one of whose toes is a yard in length; and how futile the appliances of modern art, when directed to its transportation for a distance of one hundred and fifty miles! The architrave at each end of the court was upheld by four caryatides, thirty feet in height. Though much defaced, they are still standing, but are dwarfed by the mighty limbs of Remeses. It is difficult to account for the means by which the colossus was broken. There are no marks of any instruments which could have forced such a mass asunder, and the only plausible conjecture I have heard is, that the stone must have been subjected to an intense heat and afterwards to the action of water. The statue, in its sitting position, must have been nearly sixty feet in height, and is the largest in the world, though not so high as the rock-hewn monoliths of Aboo-Simbel. The Turks and Arabs have cut several mill-stones out of its head, without any apparent diminution of its size.

The Memnonium differs from the other temples of Egypt in being almost faultless in its symmetry, even when measured by the strictest rules of art. I know of nothing so exquisite as the central colonnade of its grand hall—a double row of pillars, forty-five feet in height and twenty-three in circumference, crowned with capitals resembling the bell-shaped blossoms of the lotus. One must see them to comprehend how

this simple form, whose expression is all sweetness and tenderness in the flower, softens and beautifies the solid majesty of the shaft. In spite of their colossal proportions, there is nothing massive or heavy in their aspect. The cup of the capital curves gently outward from the abacus on which the architrave rests, and seems the natural blossom of the columnar stem. On either side of this perfect colonnade are four rows of Osiride pillars, of smaller size, yet the variety of their form and proportions only enhances the harmony of the whole. This is one of those enigmas in architecture which puzzle one on his first acquaintance with Egyptian temples, and which he is often forced blindly to accept as new laws of art, because his feeling tells him they are true, and his reason cannot satisfactorily demonstrate that they are false.

We waited till the yellow rays of sunset fell on the capitals of the Memnonium, and they seemed, like the lotus flowers, to exhale a vapory light, before we rode home. All night we wandered in dreams through kingly vaults, with starry ceilings and illuminated walls; but on looking out of our windows at dawn, we saw the red saddle-cloths of our horses against the dark background of the palm grove, as they came down to the boat. No second nap was possible, after such a sight, and many minutes had not elapsed before we were tasting the cool morning air in the delight of a race up and down the shore. Our old guide, however, was on his donkey betimes, and called us off to our duty. We passed Goorneh, and ascended the eastern face of the mountain to the tombs of the priests and private citizens of Thebes. For miles along the mountain side, one sees nothing but heaps of sand and rubbish, with here and there an Arab hut, built against the face of a tomb

whose chambers serve as pigeon-houses, and stalls for asses. The earth is filled with fragments of mummies, and the bandages in which they were wrapped; for even the sanctity of death itself, is here neither respected by the Arabs nor the Europeans whom they imitate. I cannot conceive the passion which some travellers have, of carrying away withered hands and fleshless legs, and disfiguring the abodes of the dead with their insignificant names. I should as soon think of carving my initials on the back of a live Arab, as on these venerable monuments.

The first tomb we entered almost cured us of the desire to visit another. It was that called the Assasseef, built by a wealthy priest, and it is the largest in Thebes. Its outer court measures one hundred and three by seventy-six feet, and its passages extend between eight and nine hundred feet into the mountain. We groped our way between walls as black as ink, through long, labyrinthine suites of chambers, breathing a deathlike and oppressive odor. The stairways seemed to lead into the bowels of the earth, and on either hand yawned pits of uncertain depth. As we advanced, the ghostly vaults rumbled with a sound like thunder, and hundreds of noisome bats, scared by the light, dashed against the walls and dropped at our feet. We endured this for a little while, but on reaching the entrance to some darker and deeper mystery, were so surrounded by the animals, who struck their filthy wings against our faces, that not for ten kings' tombs would we have gone a step further. My friend was on the point of vowing never to set his foot in another tomb, but I persuaded him to wait until we had seen that of Amunoph. I followed the guide, who enticed me by flattering promises into a great many

snakelike holes, and when he was tired with crawling in the dust, sent one of our water-carriers in advance, who dragged me in and out by the heels.

The temple of Medeenet Abou is almost concealed by the ruins of a Coptic village, among which it stands, and by which it is partially buried. The outer court, pylon and main hall of the smaller temple rise above the mounds and overlook the plain of Thebes, but scarcely satisfy the expectation of the traveller, as he approaches. You first enter an inclosure surrounded by a low stone wall, and standing in advance of the pylon. The rear wall, facing the entrance, contains two single pillars, with bell-shaped capitals, which rise above it and stand like guards before the doorway of the pylon. Here was another enigma for us. Who among modern architects would dare to plant two single pillars before a pyramidal gateway of solid masonry, and then inclose them in a plain wall, rising to half their height? Yet here the symmetry of the shafts is not injured by the wall in which they stand, nor oppressed by the ponderous bulk of the pylon. On the contrary, the light columns and spreading capitals, like a tuft of wild roses hanging from the crevice of a rock, brighten the rude strength of the masses of stone with a gleam of singular loveliness. What would otherwise only impress you by its size, now endears itself to you by its beauty. Is this the effect of chance, or the result of a finer art than that which flourishes in our day? I will not pretend to determine, but I must confess that Egypt, in whose ruins I had expected to find only a sort of barbaric grandeur, has given me a new insight into that vital Beauty which is the soul of true Art.

We devoted little time to the ruined court and sanctuaries

which follow the pylon, and to the lodges of the main temple standing beside them like watch-towers, three stories in height. The majestic pylon of the great temple of Remeses III. rose behind them, out of heaps of pottery and unburnt bricks, and the colossal figure of the monarch in his car, borne by two horses into the midst of the routed enemy, attracted us from a distance. We followed the exterior wall of the temple, for its whole length of more than six hundred feet, reading the sculptured history of his conquests. The entire outer wall of the temple presents a series of gigantic cartoons, cut in the blocks of sandstone, of which it is built. Remeses is always the central figure, distinguished from subjects and foes no less by his superior stature than by the royal emblems which accompany him. Here we see heralds sounding the trumpet in advance of his car, while his troops pass in review before him; there, with a lion walking by his side, he sets out on his work of conquest. His soldiers storm a town, and we see them climbing the wall with ladders, while a desperate hand-to-hand conflict is going on below. In another place, he has alighted from his chariot and stands with his foot on the neck of a slaughtered king. Again, his vessels attack a hostile navy on the sea. One of the foreign craft becomes entangled and is capsized, yet while his spearmen hurl their weapons among the dismayed enemy, the sailors rescue those who are struggling in the flood. After we have passed through these strange and stirring pictures, we find the monarch reposing on his throne, while his soldiers deposit before him the hands of the slaughtered, and his scribes present to him lists of their numbers, and his generals lead to him long processions of fettered captives. Again, he is represented as offering a group of subject kings to Amun, the The-



ban Jupiter, who says to him : " Go, my cherished and chosen, make war on foreign nations, besiege their forts and carry off their people to live as captives." On the front wall, he holds in his grasp the hands of a dozen monarchs, while with the other hand he raises his sword to destroy them. Their faces express the very extreme of grief and misery, but he is cold and calm as Fate itself.

We slid down the piles of sand and entered by a side-door into the grand hall of the temple. Here, as at Dendera, a surprise awaited us. We stood on the pavement of a magnificent court, about one hundred and thirty feet square, around which ran a colonnade of pillars, eight feet square and forty feet high. On the western side is an inner row of circular columns, twenty-four feet in circumference, with capitals representing the papyrus blossom. The entire court, with its walls, pillars and doorways, is covered with splendid sculptures and traces of paint, and the ceiling is blue as the noonday sky, and studded with stars. Against each of the square columns facing the court once stood a colossal caryatid, upholding the architrave of another colonnade of granite shafts, nearly all of which have been thrown from their bases and lie shivered on the pavement. This court opens towards the pylon into another of similar dimensions, but buried almost to the capitals of its columns in heaps of rubbish. The character of the temple is totally different from that of every other in Egypt. Its height is small in proportion to its great extent, and it therefore loses the airy lightness of the Memnonium and the impressive grandeur of Dendera. Its expression is that of a massive magnificence, if I may use such a doubtful compound : no single epithet suffices to describe it.

With Medeenet Abou finished our survey of the western division of Thebes—two long days of such experience as the contemplation of a lifetime cannot exhaust. At sunset we took advantage of the wind, parted from our grooms and water-carriers, who wished to accompany me to Khartoum, and crossed the Nile to Luxor.

—I should certainly make despotic use of it, in tearing down some dozens of villages and setting some thousands of Copts and Fellahs at work in exhuming what their ancestors have mutilated and buried. The world-cannot spare these remains. Tear down Roman ruins if you will; level Cyclopean walls, build bridges with the stones of Gothic abbeys and feudal fortresses; but lay no hand on the glory and grandeur of Egypt.

In order to ascend the great pylon of the temple, we were obliged to pass through a school, in which thirty or forty little Luxorians were conning their scraps of the Koran. They immediately surrounded us, holding up their tin slates, scribbled with Arabic characters, for our inspection, and demanded back-sheesh for their proficiency. The gray-bearded pedagogue tried to quiet them, but could not prevent several from following us. The victories of Remeses are sculptured on the face of the towers of the pylon, but his colossi, solid figures of granite, which sit on either side of the entrance, have been much defaced. The lonely obelisk, which stands a little in advance, on the left hand, is more perfect than its Parisian mate. From this stately entrance, an avenue of colossal sphinxes once extended to the Ptolemaic pylon of Karnak, a distance of a mile and a half. The sphinxes have disappeared, but the modern Arab road leads over its site, through fields of waste grass.

And now we galloped forward, through a long procession of camels, donkeys, and Desert Arabs armed with spears, towards Karnak, the greatest ruin in the world, the crowning triumph of Egyptian power and Egyptian art. Except a broken stone here and there protruding through the soil, the plain is as desolate as if it had never been conscious of a human dwelling, and only on reaching the vicinity of the mud

hamlet of Karnak, can the traveller realize that he is in Thebes. Here the camel-path drops into a broad excavated avenue, lined with fragments of sphinxes and shaded by starveling acacias. As you advance, the sphinxes are better preserved and remain seated on their pedestals, but they have all been decapitated. Though of colossal proportions, they are seated so close to each other, that it must have required nearly two thousand to form the double row to Luxor. The avenue finally reaches a single pylon, of majestic proportions, built by one of the Ptolemies, and covered with profuse hieroglyphics. Passing through this, the sphinxes lead you to another pylon, followed by a pillared court and a temple built by the later Remesides. This, I thought, while my friend was measuring the girth of the pillars, is a good beginning for Karnak, but it is certainly much less than I expect. "*Tūāl min hennee!*" (come this way!) called the guide, as if reading my mind, and led me up the heaps of rubbish to the roof and pointed to the north.

Ah, there was Karnak! Had I been blind up to this time, or had the earth suddenly heaved out of her breast the remains of the glorious temple? From all parts of the plain of Thebes I had seen it in the distance—a huge propylon, a shattered portico, and an obelisk, rising above the palms. Whence this wilderness of ruins, spreading so far as to seem a city rather than a temple—pylon after pylon, tumbling into enormous cubes of stone, long colonnades, supporting fragments of Titanic roofs, obelisks of red granite, and endless walls and avenues, branching out to isolated portals? Yet they stood as silently amid the accumulated rubbish of nearly four thousand years, and the sunshine threw its yellow lustre as serenely over the

despoiled sanctuaries, as if it had never been otherwise, since the world began. Figures are of no use, in describing a place like this, but since I must use them, I may say that the length of the ruins before us, from west to east, was twelve hundred feet, and that the total circumference of Karnak, including its numerous pylæ, or gateways, is a mile and a half.

We mounted and rode with fast-beating hearts to the western or main entrance, facing the Nile. The two towers of the propylon—pyramidal masses of solid stone—are three hundred and twenty-nine feet in length, and the one which is least ruined, is nearly one hundred feet in height. On each side of the sculptured portal connecting them, is a tablet left by the French army, recording the geographical position of the principal Egyptian temples. We passed through and entered an open court, more than three hundred feet square, with a corridor of immense pillars on each side, connecting it with the towers of a second pylon, nearly as gigantic as the first. A colonnade of lofty shafts, leading through the centre of the court, once united the two entrances, but they have all been hurled down and lay as they fell, in long lines of disjointed blocks, except one, which holds its solitary lotus-bell against the sky. Two mutilated colossi of red granite still guard the doorway, whose lintel-stones are forty feet in length. Climbing over the huge fragments which have fallen from above and almost blocked up the passage, we looked down into the grand hall of the temple.

I knew the dimensions of this hall, beforehand; I knew the number and size of the pillars, but I was no more prepared for the reality than those will be, who may read this account of it and afterwards visit Karnak for themselves. It is the great good-luck of travel that many things must be seen to be known

Nothing could have compensated for the loss of that overwhelming confusion of awe, astonishment, and delight, which came upon me like a flood. I looked down an avenue of twelve pillars—six on each side—each of which was thirty-six feet in circumference and nearly eighty feet in height. Crushing as were these ponderous masses of sculptured stone, the spreading bell of the lotus-blossoms which crowned them, clothed them with an atmosphere of lightness and grace. In front, over the top of another pile of colossal blocks, two obelisks rose sharp and clear, with every emblem legible on their polished sides. On each side of the main aisle are seven other rows of columns—one hundred and twenty-two, in all—each of which is about fifty feet high and twenty-seven in circumference. They have the Osiride form, without capitals, and do not range with the central shafts. In the efforts of the conquerors to overthrow them, two have been hurled from their places and thrown against the neighboring ones, where they still lean, as if weary with holding up the roof of massive sandstone. I walked alone through this hall, trying to bear the weight of its unutterable majesty and beauty. That I had been so oppressed by Dendera, seemed a weakness which I was resolved to conquer, and I finally succeeded in looking on Karnak with a calmness more commensurate with its sublime repose—but not by daylight.

My ride back to Luxor, towards evening, was the next best thing after Karnak. The little animal I rode had become excited by jumping over stones and sliding down sand-heaps; our guide began to show his Bedouin blood by dashing at full gallop toward the pylons and reining in his horse at a bound, and, to conclude, I became infected with a lawless spirit that could not easily be laid. The guide's eyes sparkled when I

proposed a race. We left my friend and the water-carriers, bounded across the avenue of sphinxes, and took a smooth path leading toward the Desert. My mare needed but a word and a jog of the iron stirrup. Away we flew, our animals stretching themselves for a long heat, crashing the dry dourra-stalks, clearing the water-ditches, and scattering on all sides the Arab laborers we met. After a glorious gallop of two or three miles my antagonist was fairly distanced; but one race would not content him, so we had a second, and finally a third, on the beach of Luxor. The horses belonged to him, and it was a matter of indifference which was the swiftest; he raced merely for the delight of it, and so did I.

The same gallant mare was ready for me at night. It was precisely full moon, and I had determined on visiting Karnak again before leaving. There was no one but the guide and I, he armed with his long spear, and I with my pistols in my belt. There was a wan haze in the air, and a pale halo around the moon, on each side of which appeared two faint mock-moons. It was a ghostly light, and the fresh north-wind, coming up the Nile, rustled solemnly in the palm-trees. We trotted silently to Karnak, and leaped our horses over the fragments until we reached the foot of the first obelisk. Here we dismounted and entered the grand hall of pillars. There was no sound in all the temple, and the guide, who seemed to comprehend my wish, moved behind me as softly as a shadow, and spoke not a word. It needs this illumination to comprehend Karnak. The unsightly rubbish has disappeared: the rents in the roof are atoned for by the moonlight they admit; the fragments shivered from the lips of the mighty capitals are only the crumpled edges of the flower; a maze of shadows hides the

desolation of the courts, but every pillar and obelisk, pylon and propylon is glorified by the moonlight. The soul of Karnak is soothed and tranquillized. Its halls look upon you no longer with an aspect of pain and humiliation. Every stone seems to say: "I am not fallen, for I have defied the ages. I am a part of that grandeur which has never seen its peer, and I shall endure for ever, for the world has need of me."

I climbed to the roof, and sat looking down into the hushed and awful colonnades, till I was thoroughly penetrated with their august and sublime expression. I should probably have remained all night, an amateur colossus, with my hands on my knees, had not the silence been disturbed by two arrivals of romantic tourists—an Englishman and two Frenchmen. We exchanged salutations, and I mounted the restless mare again, touched her side with the stirrup, and sped back to Luxor. The guide galloped beside me, occasionally hurling his spear into the air and catching it as it fell, delighted with my readiness to indulge his desert whims. I found the captain and sailors all ready and my friend smoking his pipe on deck. In half an hour we had left Thebes.



## CHAPTER XI.

## FROM THEBES TO THE NUBIAN FRONTIER.

The Temple of Hermontis—Esneh and its Temple—The Governor—El Kab by Torch-light—The Temple of Edfou—The Quarries of Djebel Silsileh—Ombos—Approach to Nubia—Change in the Scenery and Inhabitants—A Mirage—Arrival at Assouan.

OUR journey from Thebes to Assouan occupied six days, including a halt of twenty-four hours at Esneh. We left Luxor on the night of December 8th, but the westward curve of the Nile brought us in opposition with the wind, and the next day at noon we had only reached Erment, the ancient Hermontis, in sight of the three peaks of the Theban hills. We left our men to tug the boat along shore, and wandered off to the mounds of the old city, still graced with a small temple, or lying-in house of the goddess Reto, who is here represented as giving birth to the god Hor-pire. The sculptures in the dark chambers, now used as stalls for asses, were evidently intended only for the priesthood of the temple, and are not repeated, as are those of other temples, in the halls open to the public. Notwithstanding the great license which the Egyptian faith assumed, its symbols are, in general, scrupulously guarded from all low and unworthy forms of representation.

The group of pillars in the outer court charmed us by the

richness and variety of their designs. No two capitals are of similar pattern, while in their combinations of the papyrus, the lotus and the palm-leaf, they harmonize one with another and as a whole. The abacus, between the capital and the architrave, is so high as almost to resemble a second shaft. In Karnak and the Memnonium it is narrow, and lifts the ponderous beam just enough to prevent its oppressing the lightness of the capital. I was so delighted with the pillars of Hermonthis that I scarcely knew whether to call this peculiarity a grace or a defect. I have never seen it employed in modern architecture, and judge therefore that it has either been condemned by our rules or that our architects have not the skill and daring of the Egyptians.

We reached Esneh the same night, but were obliged to remain all the next day in order to allow our sailors to bake their bread. We employed the time in visiting the temple, the only remnant of the ancient Latopolis, and the palace of Abbas Pasha, on the bank of the Nile. The portico of the temple, half buried in rubbish, like that of Dendera, which it resembles in design, is exceedingly beautiful. Each of its twenty-four columns is crowned with a different capital, so chaste and elegant in their execution that it is impossible to give any one the preference. The designs are mostly copied from the doum-palm, the date-palm, and the lotus, but the cane, the vine, and various water-plants are also introduced. The building dates from the time of the Ptolemies, and its sculptures are uninteresting. We devoted all our time to the study of the capitals, a labyrinth of beauty, in which we were soon entangled. The Governor of Esneh, Ali Effendi, a most friendly and agreeable Arab, accompanied us through the tem-

ple, and pointed out all the fishes, birds and crocodiles he could find. To him they were evidently the most interesting things in it. He asked me how old the building was, and by whom it had been erected. On leaving, we accepted his invitation to partake of coffee and pipes. The visit took place in due form, with many grave salutations, which we conscientiously imitated. Achmet had returned to our boat, and my small stock of Arabic was soon exhausted, but we managed to exchange all the necessary common-places.

The day of leaving Esneh, we reached El Kab, the ancient Eleuthyas, whose rock-tombs are among the most curious in Egypt. We landed at twilight, provided with candles, and made our way through fields of wiry *halfeh* grass, and through a breach in the brick wall of the ancient town, to the Arabian Desert. It was already dark, but our guide, armed with his long spear, stalked vigorously forward, and brought us safely up the mountain path to the entrances of the sepulchres. There are a large number of these, but only two are worth visiting, on account of the light which they throw on the social life of the Egyptians. The owner of the tomb and his wife—a red man and a yellow woman—are here seen, receiving the delighted guests. Seats are given them, and each is presented with an aromatic flower, while the servants in the kitchen hasten to prepare savory dishes. In other compartments, all the most minute processes of agriculture are represented with wonderful fidelity. So little change has taken place in three thousand years, that they would answer, with scarcely a correction, as illustrations of the Fellah agriculture of Modern Egypt.

The next morning we walked ahead to the temple of Edfou,

shooting a few brace of fat partridges by the way, and scaring two large jackals from their lairs in the thick grass. The superb pylon of the temple rose above the earthy mounds of Apollinopolis like a double-truncated pyramid. It is in an entire state of preservation, with all its internal chambers, passages and stairways. The exterior is sculptured with colossal figures of the gods, thirty feet in height, and from the base of the portal to the scroll-like cornice of the pylon, is more than a hundred feet. Through the door we entered a large open court, surrounded by a colonnade. The grand portico of the temple, buried nearly to the tops of its pillars, faced us, and we could only judge, from the designs of the capitals and the girth of the shaft, the imposing effect which it must have produced on those who entered the court. The interior is totally filled with rubbish, and a whole village of Arab huts stands on the roof.

A strong wind carried us, before sunset, to the quarries of Djebel Silsileh, the "Mountain of the Chain," where the Nile is compressed between two rugged sandstone hills. The river is not more than three hundred yards broad, and the approach to this rocky gateway, after so many weeks of level alluvial plain, is very striking. Here are the sandstone quarries whence the huge blocks were cut, to build the temples and shape the colossi of Thebes. They lie on the eastern bank, close to the river, and the ways down which the stones were slid to the vessels that received them, are still to be seen. The stone is of a pale reddish-brown color, and a very fine and clear grain. It appears to have been divided into squares of the proper size, and cut from above downward. The shape of many of the enormous blocks may be easily traced. In one place the rock

has been roughly hewn into a sort of temple, supported by pillars thirty feet square, and with an entrance as grand and rude as a work of the Titans.

In the morning we awoke in the shadow of Ombos, which stands on a hill overlooking the Nile, into which its temple to Isis has fallen. Little now remains of the great temple to Savak, the crocodile-headed god, the deity of Ombos, but its double portico, supported by thirteen pillars, buried nearly waist-deep in the sands. The aspect of these remains, seated on the lonely promontory commanding the course of the river and the harvest-land of the opposite shore, while the stealthy Desert approaches it from behind, and year by year heaps the sand higher against the shattered sanctuary, is sadly touching. We lingered and lingered around its columns, loth to leave the ruined grace which a very few years will obliterate. Two such foes as the Nile and the Desert make rapid progress, where no human hand is interposed to stay them. As we sailed away, a large crocodile, perhaps Savak himself, lay motionless on a sand-bank with his long snout raised in the air.

We were two days in sailing from Ombos to Assouan owing to a dead calm, the first in two weeks. The nights were very cool, and the mid-day temperature not too warm for comfort. One morning my thermometer stood at  $40^{\circ}$ ; the Arabs complained bitterly of the cold, and, wrapped in their woollen mantles, crawled about the deck as languidly as benumbed flies. At noon the mercury did not often rise above  $75^{\circ}$  in the shade. As we approach Nubia, the scenery of the river undergoes a complete change. The rugged hills of black sandstone and granite usurp the place of the fields, and leave but a narrow strip of cultivable land on either side. The Arabs are